Farmhand

Bob Clampett and FUNNYWORLD's editor at Clampett's office in Hollywood last summer. See Page 12.

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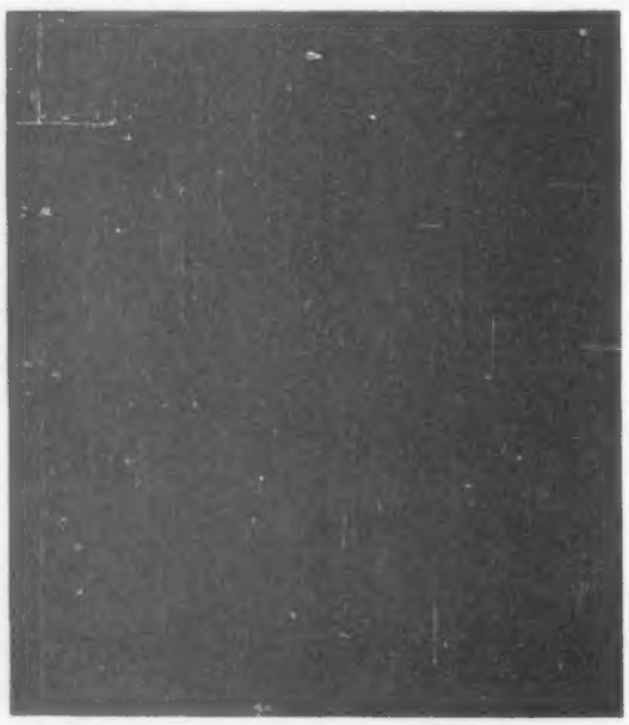

FUNNYWORLD

Number Twelve Summer 1970

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FUNNYWORLD is an amateur, non-profit magazine devoted to comic books, comic strips and animated cartoons, and is published at irregular intervals by Mike Barrier, Box 5229, Brady Station, Little Rock, Arkansas 72205. Phone: (501) 225-5455. Or, if you want to call me during the day, my office phone at the ARKANSAS GAZETTE, where I'm a columnist, is (501) 374-5081, ext. 58. Entire contents copyright©1970 by J. Michael Barrier. FUNNYWORLD is intended for adult readers and is not a children's magazine.

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the funniest animal:

Or, What Passes for FUNNYWORLD's Editorial Page

Some of FUNNYWORLD's regular features are missing from this issue, namely Questions and Answers and "Fearless Fang," my comic strip. I had far more material on hand than this issue could accommodate, and Q&A and the impeccably attired hamster had to be thrown to the wolves. They should be back next issue.

Many people deserve thanks for their help with this issue, but I must single out Bob Clampett, Bill Spicer and Gail Sutton. Bob has been unfailingly generous with his time and energy in the preparation of the interview with him, and Bill and Gail have patiently tutored me on the ins and outs of offset printing. The results justify their labors, I hope.

This is, of course, the first issue of FUNNYWORLD to be printed by offset. That largely accounts for its year-long pregnancy. Future issues should appear much more frequently, now that most of the kinks have been worked out. A lot of the material for those issues is already in hand, including six more interviews with important figures in animation and the comics. Scheduled for the next issue are interviews with Chuck Jones (the creator of the Road Runner and a Warner Brothers cartoon director for twenty-five years) and Carl Stalling (composer of the music for six hundred Warner cartoons, and for Walt Disney's earliest sound cartoons). Following will be interviews with Ward Kimball (the Disney animator and director, and this year's Oscar winner), Mel Blanc (the voice of Bugs Bunny and many other characters), Billy Bletcher (the voice of the Big Bad Wolf and Peg Leg Pete), and Roger Armstrong (one of Dell/Western's leading comic-book artists and writers in the Forties). All these interviews were recorded during a two-week visit to California I made in June 1969. That trip was immensely rewarding, but also frustrating, since I learned too late that ten days in Los Angeles (the rest of the time was spent in San Francisco) was not enough to do everything I wanted to do. In addition to recording thriteen hours of interviews, I met many fans and professionals, visited Disneyland (which I didn't like very much, except for the pirate ride), and spent five immensely enjoyable hours in the company of Carl Barks at his home outside Los Angeles. I didn't record an interview with Barks, since he felt "interviewed out," but I hope to do so on my next visit.

In addition to the interviews, articles planned for future FUNNYWORLDS include a survey by Mark Kausler of the earliest Disney sound cartoons... Fred Patten on French "funny animals" ...Milt Gray on pay television's impact on animation...Maggie Thompson on Walt Kelly's Peter Wheat...and Hames Ware on cartoon voices. All of these are in hand, or promised. I hope to do more writing of my own, starting with an article on Uncle Scrooge.

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I've had suggestions for articles from readers, too. John Fawcett has become very interested in Felix the Cat, a character who certainly deserves to have a lot more written about him. Mike Benton has proposed an article on the treatment of the Negro in the "funny animal" comic books of the Forties, with the emphasis on such characters as Kelly's Bumbazine, Lantz's Li'l Eight Ball and OUR GANG's Bucky. Tom Andrae has suggested an article on television puppet shows. There are many other possibilities. Ranging farther afield, Bruce Dickson has suggested some possible topics for my "Sons of Aesop" column in GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE. That column is dormant now, but the topics Bruce has suggested would make interesting articles for FUNNYWORLD, too. I'm not qualified to write such articles, but I'm sure there are those among FUNNYWORLD's readers who could expound knowledgeably on topics like these: ". . . the manner in which Eisner and, probably a better example, Bob Powell have used the distorted and exaggerated angles and positions **right out of funny comics** on realistic figures. Please don't forget Powell, as many have. He is one step closer to 'funny animal' than Eisner, and did it very well. In that vein, mention Eisner's effective mixture of the rules of funny-animal immortality and real-character immortality in the figure of The Spirit, who really gets trounced many times but has superhuman resilience. Discuss Jerry Grandenetti and his mixture of funny-animal distortion and subjective reality. Include Metzger and his synthesis somewhere."

I don't have to point out that the kind of article Bruce is talking about simply isn't being written today, except perhaps for GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE. And it should be, and must be, if comics/animation fan activity is to grow in meaning.

This is as good a time as any to emphasize that FUNNYWORLD is **not** simply a "funny animal" fan magazine. I love the Disney and Kelly and Barks animals, and others of their kind, best of all, but my interest is hardly restricted to them,nor are FUNNYWORLD's pages. **Any** well-written, thoughtful, carefully researched piece on any aspect of comics or animation is welcome. Certainly, a magazine that pretends to take comics seriously couldn't exclude a good article on, say, Harvey Kurtzman or Will Eisner, or even Jack Kirby. "Realistic" comics and animation have been discussed frequently in FUNNYWORLD's pages, and will be in the future, even though the magazine's focus will probably remain on humorous comics and cartoons. I believe strongly that the highest achievements in animation and comics have been in comedy, but that doesn't foreclose my admiration for "serious" efforts.

FUNNYWORLD also needs illustrations—both original drawings, for use as spot illustrations, and stills from cartoons. The latter—especially stills from Warner, Lantz, and MGM cartoons—have been extraordinarily difficult to locate, and I'm interested in borrowing or purchasing any that may be available. The same is true for other material related to cartoons—model sheets, sketches, and the like.

●

The circulation of this issue is much larger than the circulation of any of the preceding issues, all of which were mimeographed. Since so many readers are new to FUNNYWORLD, I'd like to know how many would be interested in a sort of "Best of FUNNYWORLD,"

reprinting everything in the first eleven issues that's still of interest. Let me know if you'd buy one.

●

Walt Disney Productions and the Disney family have announced the formation of the Walt Disney Archives, to preserve and make available to qualified researchers (and to departments at the studio) historical material about Walt Disney and his achievements. Housed in the Archives, in addition to Disney's personal files, will be business records, correspondence, publicity material, photographs, original art work, motion pictures, video tapes, tape recordings and Disney merchandise and books.

David R. Smith, formerly a reference librarian at UCLA, has been hired by the Disney studio as archivist. Dave will plan the organization of the Archives and start the collecting and cataloging of material. The studio already has practically complete collections of Disney books and comic books, but has only a selection of early Disney merchandise.

Dave will be glad to correspond with any Disney collectors who have questions, although answers may not always be readily available, at least not until the Archives are organized. His address: David R. Smith, Archivist, Walt Disney Productions, 500 South Buena Vista, Burbank, California 91503.

●

I need a regular supply of the TOP COMICS reprints of Disney comic books, if anyone has access to them.

●

Many of FUNNYWORLD's readers are out of the mainstream of comics/animation fan activity and so are unaware of other magazines—fan, professional, and semipro—that probably would interest them. For their benefit, here's a listing of some of those magazines.

GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE ($1.00 a copy, or four issues for $4.00, from Bill Spicer, 4878 Granada Street, Los Angeles, California 90042; the most recent issue is No. 10, published in May 1969). The best-looking, best-reading comics fan magazine available today. Highly recommended.

A FANZINE (65 cents a copy from Dan McAvoy, 5720 Middaugh Street, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515; most recent issue is No. 2, published in October 1969). The first issue (a reprint edition of which is also available for 65 cents) was called DISNEYDOM, but the Disney people took exception to that, and the name was changed for the second issue. A FANZINE is the first fan magazine devoted entirely to Walt Disney; unfortunately, McAvoy and his staff don't know enough about their subject yet. As a result, they've had to lift a lot of material from other sources. Some of McAvoy's sources are credited, but others are not. The original material is mostly minor-league stuff. In the first issue, for example, there's a brief article on Carl Barks by Richard Striner, in which a few interesting ideas are smothered in some appalling graduate-student prose. There are also three reviews of Schickel's THE DISNEY VERSION, one reprinted from BOOK WEEK, two by fans, and none of them any good. The review by fan William E. Novey is full of silly mistakes; for example, he says, "...nowhere in the book does Schickel condemn the technical side of Disney's efforts." Novey must not have finished reading the book. The first issue of A FANZINE contains only about eighteen pages of editorial matter; the second issue contains about twenty-seven. Hardly a bargain. However, A FANZINE contains a continuing series that is worth the price of the whole magazine: "The Way to Tour Disneyland" by Don Novey. The articles have a faintly manic quality ("... we planned an intense tour of Disneyland, a six-day scrutinizing, one day for each Disney 'land'"), but it is impossible to imagine a better guide to Disneyland. Novey is thorough, God knows, and approaches each attraction with the cold eye and discriminating taste heretofore associated only with the compilers of the GUIDE MICHELIN. If you plan to visit Disneyland any time soon, take along Novey's articles. I wish McAvoy had devoted his first issue to a full-scale article by Don Novey on all of Disneyland's attractions, with follow-up articles in later issues. That way, he could have eliminated a lot of shameless padding.

©Walt Disney Productions

FILM FAN MONTHLY ($4.25 a year, or $6.00 a year by first-class mail, from FFM, 77 Grayson Place, Teaneck, New Jersey 07666). An impeccably researched and edited magazine, emphasizing the films of the 1930s and 1940s. Of special interest to FUNNYWORLD readers are these back issues (available for 70 cents each from the above address): No. 68, a Walt Disney memorial issue; No. 79, an article by Mark Kausler on Ub Iwerks; No. 87, two hostile reviews of THE DISNEY VERSION; No. 104, "The Disney Studio Today," with extensive quotes from an interview with Ward Kimball.

NEWFANGLES ($1.00 for ten issues from Don and Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor, Ohio 44060; published monthly). Subscribing to this newsletter is the best way to keep up with all the comics/animation news that FUNNYWORLD must ignore, of necessity.

COMIC ART (50 cents a copy from the Thompsons, address above; most recent issue—now out of print—is No. 7, published in November 1968). Published infrequently, but always worth the wait, because of its variety of articles on the entire comics/animation field.

GOSH WOW (50 cents a copy from Robert Schoenfeld, 9516 Minerva, St. Louis, Missouri 63115; most recent issue is No. 3, published in October 1969). The third issue is notable for a lengthy strip by George Metzger, one of the most creative of the underground cartoonists.

ALTER EGO ($1.50 a copy, or four issues for $5.00, from Alter Ego, 305 East 86th Street, Apt. 18K-West, New York, New York 10028; the most recent issue is No. 10, published in February 1970). A super-hero fan magazine, but more than just that; the tenth issue is worth buying if only for John Benson's interview with Gil Kane.

WITZEND ($1.50 a copy from Witzend, Box 882, Ansonia Station, New York, New York 10023; the most recent issue is No. 7, published in March 1970). No. 6 (still in print) has the infallible John Benson, this time interviewing Will Eisner, the creator of The Spirit. The magazine is a beautifully printed playground for professional cartoonists, full of all sorts of self-indulgent strips.

CARTOONIST PROFILES ($2.50 a copy, or $8.00 for four issues, from Cartoonist Profiles, Box 325, Fairfield, Connecticut 06430; published quarterly). Another professional magazine, edited by a newspaper cartoonist (Jud Hurd), and mostly by and about other newspaper cartoonists. Establishment-oriented, to say the least, but still with lots of interesting material, some of it concerning animation and comic books.

NOTES ON THE UNDERGROUND

By Mike Barrier

Science-fiction fans are aware of what is called Sturgeon's Law; ninety per cent of everything is crud. Sturgeon's Law applies increasingly to underground comic books.

Robert Crumb's ZAP COMICS was the first of the breed (published late in 1967), followed closely by comics published by Jay Lynch (BIJOU) and Gilbert Shelton (FEDS 'N' HEADS), both of them, like Crumb, alumni of Harvey Kurtzman's HELP! magazine. Comic strips were appearing before then in underground newspapers, and they still do, but the great explosion in underground strips has come in the comic books. Now, a listing of all the available underground comics fills a legal-size sheet of paper. Regrettably, the ones worth reading can be listed in a considerably smaller space.

It's become a little hard to say just what an underground comic book is. Most of them are about the same size as traditional comic books, with the same slick, brightly colored covers and pulp-paper insides (although printed in black and white), but others are half the normal size, some are like tabloid newspapers, others are printed on good paper. Most of them—or at least most of the good ones—are published by San Francisco's Rip Off Press and Berkeley's Print Mint. They all share a freedom from traditional comic-strip formulae and inhibitions.

Underground comics have grown in respectability fo the point that the word "underground" has lost some of its original meaning. Crumb has been published by Viking and Ballantine—hardly fringe publishers—and Vaughn Bode is a regular contributor to CAVALIER, probably second to PLAYBOY among the skin magazines. In FUNNYWORLD last year, I mentioned the increasing attention paid to Crumb in the above-ground press, and said, "LIFE and TIME can't be far away." Well, I was wrong; NEWSWEEK got to him first. Crumb was mentioned favorably, if briefly, in the "Art" section, no less. Imitations of his cartoons have begun to infiltrate national advertising campaigns.

However, even Crumb's work is hardly sacrosanct, as witness the busts of his ZAP No. 4, presumably for the cheerful incest in the story called "Joe Blow." Crumb made the mistake, in that story, of refusing to feign shock. That was his true sin. The portrayal of incest is forgivable, even profitable, so long as you provide a frosting of morality. The authors of those thick novels that middle-aged women read are well aware of that; they're experts at titillation without guilt. Crumb, who remains an "underground" artist in all the important ways, has the unfortunate habit of taking things as they come, without blinking, and many people find that hard to take.

There's freedom to be found in drawing whatever you please, and it has pleased Crumb to draw comic strips that are filled with tolerance, good humor, and compassion for human behavior of all kinds. He's rarely a satirist, except in the most general sense. Sometimes he even pokes his readers in the ribs, to remind them that he's indulging himself. In one strip, he has a young lunatic (his eyeballs are uncoordinated, so you **know** he's nuts) chop a girl to bits. As the mad chopper sits amidst the gore, slavering, he says, "It's only a comic book, so I can do anything I want."

If we're to believe Gil Kane (in an interview with John Benson in ALTER EGO No. 10), the freedom Crumb has found in comics is nothing unique; every comic-book artist has gone into the field to find freedom of some kind. "There isn't any one of us," Kane says, "not even the mildest guy in the field, who comes into this field for any other reason except for the fact that the field releases all his suppressed fantasies."

In traditional comic books, cartoonists have worked out their fantasies within a framework that partially conceals what they're doing. Comic books, particularly those of the super-hero variety, appeal often to private fantasies, of course, but their appeal is general; the Superman or Spider-man myth can accommodate the secret longings of a wide variety of readers, which is why they are so successful. The more eccentric super-heroes sell fewer comic books. Within these generalized fantasies, individual writers and artists can let their own fancies roam free, subject only to broad guidelines, and also, not insignificantly, to the restraints of what is considered a proper style for comic-book illustration.

NARD N' PAT, SUPER SNOOPERS, AT YER SERVICE. "INVASION-OF-PRIVACY" IS OUR MIDDLE NAME! HUNH? ..... RIGHT ..... YOU CAN COUNT ON US ..... SURE, WE'LL BE THERE.
PSSSST! WOT GIVES POPS?

Copyright Bijou

Jay Lynch's NARD N' PAT, in BIJOU FUNNIES No. 3.

As John Benson pointed out in the letters column of FUNNYWORLD No. 11, when these professional artists get the chance to do "free" work, they don't turn out works of art, but rather give their fantasies even freer rein. The results are usually just more extreme versions of what they've already done for the kiddie trade.

Thus, in SPIDER-MAN we had Steve Ditko's beautiful-but-bitchy women, and the men who were tormented by them; in the "kinky" comic books Ditko once did for **that** trade, you had beautiful-but-bitchy women tearing the clothes off one another. More recently, Ditko's Ayn Rand-inspired "Mr. A" in WITZEND has been echoed in his comic books for National Periodicals, especially THE HAWK AND THE DOVE.

In Gil Kane's super-hero work, we have super-heroes whose faces and bodies twist and strain painfully into something almost like cartoon exaggeration. In Kane's own SAVAGE!, you have not a cartoon style, but what Kane was **really** getting at—pain and blood far more explicit than the Comics Code Authority would permit. And so it goes.

In the underground comics, not only the restraints provided in traditional comic books are gone, but so, often, is the "professionalism" that artists for traditional comic books bring to their "free" work. Many underground comics deal **only** with what John Benson calls "the raw elements of fantasy."

It's no doubt this freedom from all restraints that has attracted so many people into the field, including an increasing number who are "cartoonists" only by a generous definition of the term. It's they who have called Sturgeon's Law into play, by unleashing fantasies that are often very raw indeed.

In some cases, the fantasies seem drug-induced, and the strips perhaps drawn during a high of one kind or another. If designed to simulate what happens when you're smoking pot or dropping acid, they're not very good

THE HOG RIDIN' FOOLS.
BEER
GAS
GOTTA CHECK MY LIPSTICK
SIT DOWN, SHUT UP... AND RELAX!
© S. CLAY WILSON. 1968
THE HOG RIDIN' FOOLS IS NOT A LARGE GANG... THEY'RE SORT OF A MEDIUM SIZED GANG... JUST LARGE GUYS.
JUST GIVE ME SOME BEER AND THE ROAD AND I'M TOGETHER!
TOSS ME THE CHURCH KEY BOB.
THEY RIDE BIG MACHINES (HOGS) AND THEIR WOMEN ARE OFTEN FAT AND UGLY.. BUT LOYAL.
I'D FOLLOW MY OLD MAN ANYWHERE.
TESS
HOG
TWIN
Copyright S. Clay Wilson

A quiet moment in the unquiet world of S. Clay Wilson, from ZAP COMICS No. 2.

advertisements for those particular experiences. These chaotic, poorly drawn strips have become especially numerous in the Berkeley-based YELLOW DOG, which started out a couple of years ago as a tabloid and has since become a comic book. Some strips by Crumb and other good underground cartoonists obviously owe something to drugs, but the debt is not a large one; the artist's personality remains dominant. The only "psychedelic" strips I've seen that are really worth a damn are by Dave Sheridan and Fred Schrier in Rip Off Press' MOTHER'S OATS, published early this year. The fantasies are dreamlike, combining insanity and perfect clarity. Sheridan and Schrier know comic-strip techniques, and apply them with skill to most unlikely material. The results are exhilarating.

If most "psychedelic" strips are simply dumb, the fantasies of other underground cartoonists are twisted and malignant. It is possible to appreciate their work only as therapy, not as anything worth reading, and certainly not as "art." There's Rory Hayes, for example, whose strips bespeak a hatred and fear of women appalling in its intensity, and expressed in a drawing style that is unrelieved in its crudity. This crudity is valued by some underground cartoonists, I understand, and Hayes is regarded by them as a sort of Grandma Moses of the underground. They obviously know very little about Grandma Moses.

The strips of S. (for Steve) Clay Wilson, on the other hand, are filled with a contempt for everybody and everything, drawn in a deliberately ugly style. (Wilson can draw very well, when he so chooses.) Wilson has probably been the single most influential underground cartoonist—as I mentioned last issue, Crumb credits him with the "sex revolution" in underground comics, and he's undoubtedly right. Whether anyone would really want to take credit for unleashing the sexual paranoia evident in a lot of underground comics is another matter. Your average underground cartoonist seems to be even more sex-obsessed than your average Southern Baptist.

There can be no valid "moral" objection to Wilson's work, even though every imaginable sexual practice takes place in his strips. No girl is ever going to be seduced by an underground comic book. My basic complaint about Wilson's work is that it **is** moral, in the narrowest, nastiest sense. I said back in FUNNYWORLD No. 10 that S. Clay Wilson impressed me as an uptight little old lady in disguise. By that I meant that he seemed to share an attitude common to many little old ladies, that sex—and, by implication, life itself—is dirty and disgusting. It is in his strips, certainly. His people are all warts, moles, sweat, flab, and body hair (he can make any part of the human anatomy unappealing) and all freaks in one way or another. However, there's no indication that "normal" people would come out looking any better. He looks at humans as a Houyhnhnm might. Wilson refuses to see human beings as a whole; rather, he seizes on physical imperfections and magnifies them. This may be preferable to what happens in syndicate comic strips and traditional comic books, where everyone seems to have been photographed through those Doris Day gauzes, but it's still a distorted and limited way of looking at things.

My annoyance with Crumb's sex comics has rested on different grounds, equally removed from "morality." Crumb evidently enjoys sex, and he most assuredly enjoys thinking about it and putting his thoughts down on paper. For the most part, those thoughts are free of the bile that boils up constantly in Wilson's strips. But like just about everybody else's, Crumb's thoughts about sex tend to sameness. It's the sameness that's deadening in his one- or two- or three-page sex strips, not how explicit his sex scenes get. When I first wrote about Crumb in FUNNYWORLD No. 10, in 1968, I thought it was his show-everything approach that made his sex strips distasteful to me: ". . . Crumb has turned almost exclusively to smut in recent months. And 'smut' is the right word. A detailed physical description of a sex act doesn't convey what's really going on, any more than a detailed physical description of eating conveys how it feels to consume a fine meal, and a detailed physical description is all that smut provides. In good pornography, as in good literature, far more is implied than stated. As I've already suggested, Crumb's smut is relaxed and funny, but it's still smut, and so a dead end for a talent as great as his."

Well, maybe, but I think that what I really wanted to say (if my Presbyterian heritage wasn't trying to conceal its discomfort in the presence of all that pubic hair) is that Crumb has been giving us sex in a vacuum, and sex doesn't exist in a vacuum, and wouldn't be very interesting if it did. When Crumb is telling a real story in which sex is an element, then it becomes clear that it doesn't really matter how explicit he is. The story comes first, as it does with no other underground cartoonist, except Gilbert Shelton. There's "Dicknose," for example, a slender little fantasy in JIZ COMICS No. 1 (one of Crumb's three out-and-out sex books). As it's not hard to guess, the title character is cursed with a phallus for a nose, and endures a variety of indignities as a result thereof. Naturally, those indignities are sexual (and even anal), but the important thing is that they're indignities, and they're funny. Crumb doesn't do much with the story (Kafka might have done more), but it's Dicknose the character, not the shape of his nose who is

ultimately most memorable. This is where Crumb shines, when he so chooses, over almost all other underground cartoonists.

Crumb's relaxed, happy approach to sex in his comics is the best rebuttal to those critics who see the underground comics as simply the successors to the old eight-pagers, the little booklets in which Popeye, Jiggs and Maggie, and even Mickey and Minnie Mouse displayed talents and physical attributes never suspected by their newspaper readers. The eight-pagers were carefully tailored to adolescent fantasies; they weren't the expressions of the artists' own fantasies, any more than most pornographic books are. In every eight-pager, incredibly willing women yield themselves up to the handiest man, with the man required to put out little or no effort. That's the way most male adolescents wish it were, since they have no idea how to get their sex lives off the ground. In this way, the eight-pagers were a little like the early super-hero comic books, appealing directly and powerfully to generalized fantasies.

Crumb's strips reflect a little of that universal adolescent fantasy, but they reflect a much broader range of fantasies—and experiences—too. It's what's in his own head, and what he has seen, that Crumb is putting on paper, not what he thinks other people want to read.

Even though he panders to no one's fantasies but his own, Crumb is a careful observer of other people's fantasies. In a one-page strip in GOTHIC BLIMP WORKS No. 2, for example, a typical Crumb slob gets more and more excited as his fantasies move from plain old intercourse to pedophilia to sadism to murder. In "Dirty Dog," a poignant and funny three-page story in ZAP COMICS No. 3, another Crumb slob (an animal character this time) fills the gaping hole in his sex life with fantasies induced by a lesbian sex book. Dejected when he entered the newsstand, Dirty Dog bustles home with his purchase, happy after "testing" it with a wild fantasy. The story's tone—its mixture of laughter and tears—is typical of all of Crumb's best work, and especially of "Fritz the No-Good," which I'll get to after a while.

(There was an interesting exchange about one of Crumb's sex fantasies in a panel discussion published in New York's EAST VILLAGE OTHER last fall. The fifteen-page strip in question, in BIG ASS COMICS ("Weird sex fantasies with the behind in mind"), has a Crumb character called Eggs Ackley dealing with a gang of booted, predatory women with birds' heads—the Vulture Demonesses. Eggs winds up teaching the top Demoness—who is all gussied up in metal and leather—the joys of physical love. When the EVO's Dean Latimer called the strip "one of the most powerful things of yours I've ever seen," Crumb replied, "Trina [a female underground cartoonist] said it was very hostile toward women, though." Latimer: "Yeah?...I mean, what seven-year-old boy **isn't** hostile toward women?" Crumb: "Yeah, but when you're twenty-five you should know better." Latimer: "Yeah, but when you're twenty-five and you can re-create the sensibilities of a seven-year-old, that's really something. Art..." Crumb: "Who's recreating?" Latimer: "You mean that's the way you **feel** toward women?" Crumb: "Well, sometimes.")

The underground artists' preoccupation with sex may be due simply to sex's being the last frontier left to the comic strip to conquer—the one area that professional comic-book men, even in their "free" work, have barely touched. The flood of sex fantasies and sex comics may be followed by comic strips in which sex is dealt with

naturally and unself-consciously for the first time. But ironically, there are now so many underground strips that some echo the old eight-pagers quite precisely. Some adult artists still have adolescent fantasies, evidently—fantasies no doubt shaped in many cases by those very eight-pagers.

The underground strips can get hysterical about things besides sex, reflecting the general hysteria that has consumed the underground press in the last year or so. Less and less have underground papers been places to read the truth that Establishment papers won't print; rather, they're places to read a different kind of self-serving lie. Of course, the papers' political paranoia is more than just that, as witness the Nixon administration's contempt for civil liberties. But even so, few underground papers seem to realize that to call someone a "pig" is to become one yourself. Shrieking about a nonexistent revolution is a great deal easier than thinking and working for genuine change. If there's an authentic revolutionary in America today, he's not on the staff of RAT, he's Ralph Nader.

Fortunately, not many underground strips are as shrill as the rest of the papers. Spain Rodriguez' strips for THE EAST VILLAGE OTHER, like "Trashman" and "Manning," are among the most overtly political, and the atmosphere in his strips is far too chilly to be called hysterical. Rodriguez' background is that of a 'cycle gang member, rather than a hippie, which may account for the casual, offhand quality of the brutality in his strips (and there's a lot of it). The brutality is heightened by his extremely crude and stiff drawing style. Like S. Clay Wilson, Rodriguez uses his crudity; he isn't restricted by it. But, like Wilson's world, Rodriguez' is narrow and depressing, consisting of nothing but force, applied in various ways but always without pity. In "Trashman," some sort of revolution has riven the country and has been followed by guerrilla warfare between the radicals, led by Trashman, and the forces of the old order. In "Manning," a cold and vicious cop uses the law as his excuse to destroy people. Manning (the underground's reply to "Bullit"), is vulnerable only to superior force. Rodriguez' sympathy is with Trashman, the radical, of course, but the emphasis is more on the violence—what each side is doing to the other—than on who is doing it. Living in Rodriguez' world, so free of emotional shadings as it is, is a little like waking up one morning and finding that you've become a cat . . . or maybe a mouse.

Genuine satire isn't absent from underground comics, although it's in shorter supply than at first might be imagined. The word "satire" is much abused, to the point that almost any-

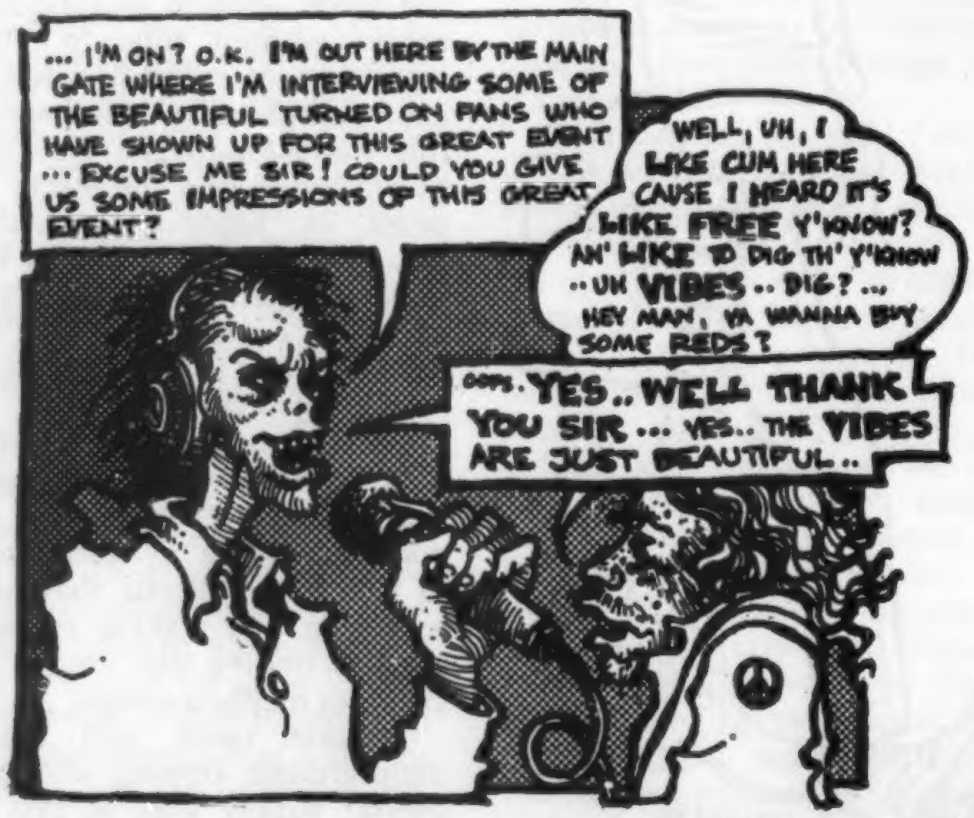
thing that someone thinks is funny has been called "satire" at one time or another. It's a little like transforming charwomen into "cleaning ladies"; somehow calling something "satire" is supposed to lend it class. (Crumb's strips are supposedly out of favor among political people because he deals with sex instead of politics, and would rather draw pubescent girls than porcine policemen.) But just being funny is quite enough, and "satire" is hardly synonymous with quality. Real satire has anger and contempt in it, and it's how successfully that anger is contained and focused that determines how good a satire is. Jay Kinney has done some good satires on middle-class attitudes (two appear in BIJOU FUNNIES No. 3) and on the New Left, but perhaps the best recent satire is Greg Irons' two-page strip on the disastrous Altamont rock festival in YELLOW DOG No. 17, published last spring. All the fatuity and self-congratulation that have inflated the "hip community" come whooshing out in one rush of hot air, with just a few pricks from Irons' pen. Irons' politics are radical, I'm sure (the strip closes with an implied denunciation of the police attacks on the Black Panthers), but there's a mind at work in his strip, and that is rare enough in underground strips (and in underground papers) to require a few huzzahs. Satire requires intelligence, not just shrieking indignation, and the more real satire appears in underground comics, the more optimistic I'll be.

It's some indication of the range of quality in underground comics that the same issue of YELLOW DOG contains a strip called "Garbageman" (as its lead story, incredibly) about a garbage monster, or something, that winds up standing atop a skyscraper like King Kong. It's a silly, juvenile piece of junk that qualifies as "underground" only because the author had the foresight to stick in the minimum number of four-letter words. The range in other underground comics is even wider—from Rory Hayes (or even lower) to Crumb and Shelton. And some people really can't tell the difference. A great setting of standards and culling of crud is bound to come, with the less talented cartoonists finding solutions for their problems other than drawing them in comic-strip form and having someone print them on pulp paper.

Thanks to all this turmoil, it's become easier to see just which underground cartoonists are really worth reading. Far from being buried in all the wasted pulp paper that passes for underground comics these days, they've bobbed to the top of the pile. Their merits are the more obvious in contrast with their incompetent imitators. Robert Crumb and Gilbert Shelton are more clearly than ever the best of the underground cartoonists. They're both "mainstream" cartoonists, to a far greater extent than almost any of the syndicated cartoonists, especially those who are carrying on once-great strips. By this I don't mean that they lean on comic-strip traditions (much less cliches), as so many newspaper cartoonists do. There's some of the traditional comic-strip rhetoric in their work—the beads of sweat, hats flying in the air, that sort of thing—but it's there by choice, and they can do without it when they so choose. What most distinguishes Crumb and Shelton is that they're great storytellers. They work with their medium, and not against it. After all, this is what a comic strip is—a narrative medium, a means of telling a story in a progression from panel to panel, through a combination of dialogue and drawings. You can embroider on that, but you can't get away from it. The comic-strip artist's basic tools are very simple, and everything turns on how skillfully he uses them. Crumb and Shelton use them skillfully, and in the service of artistic viewpoints that are essentially positive. Not in any limited, READER'S DIGEST sense, but positive in their acceptance and enjoyment of life. Most of their characters are hippies or semi-hippies, or reflect the hippie milieu in which these cartoonists live, but are human first of all. Not least, their strips are funny—smiles and laughter are a standard response. That alone makes them "underground," since laughter is subversive. The newspaper syndicates, with rare exceptions, don't peddle strips that provoke laughter, since syndicates are established institutions that have every reason to fear laughter's effects. Instead, they peddle strips that embody accepted ideas about what is "funny," even though it's been a long time since anyone cracked a smile at "Henry" or "Blondie" or any of a host of such zombies. A strip like "Peanuts," innocuous as it is, is dangerous to the syndicates because it calls into question what we have been told for years is "funny." Strips like Crumb's and Shelton's, with their complete disregard for syndicate conventions, are an even greater threat, which is why you'll never see those cartoonists on a newspaper comics page.

There are other underground cartoonists whose work is entitled to respect, but who are not as important as Crumb and Shelton because they are further out of the mainstream. Some, like Rick Griffin and Victor Moscoso, aren't really producing comic strips at all, if you accept the definition I advanced above. Griffin plays with shapes and colors in whatever medium he's using, and it's not especially important that sometimes he uses a sort of panel-to-panel continuity.

S. Clay Wilson isn't really a comic-strip artist either, for reasons Bob Follett indicates in a letter that accompanies this column. Wilson is an apocalyptic cartoonist, whose "vivid, vivid images" must be concentrated on a single large canvas to be seen to best advantage. Seen that way, Wilson's curdled vision of life takes on intensity and a certain perverse power; spread out in cramped and poorly composed panels that form a barely coherent story, it's simply repellent. Significantly, Wilson has done a portfolio of drawings, and double-page drawings by him turn up frequently in underground comics. He should do more such drawings, and fewer comic strips. Wilson will never be the Twentieth Century's Hieronymus Bosch (his Hell is too small), but he could come pretty close.


... I'M ON? O.K. I'M OUT HERE BY THE MAIN GATE WHERE I'M INTERVIEWING SOME OF THE BEAUTIFUL TURNED ON FANS WHO HAVE SHOWN UP FOR THIS GREAT EVENT ... EXCUSE ME SIR! COULD YOU GIVE US SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THIS GREAT EVENT?
WELL, UH, I LIKE CUM HERE CAUSE I HEARD IT'S LIKE FREE Y'KNOW? AN' LIKE TO DIG TH' Y'KNOW .. UH VIBES .. DIG? ... HEY MAN, YA WANNA BUY SOME REDS?
OOPS. YES.. WELL THANK YOU SIR ... YES.. THE VIBES ARE JUST BEAUTIFUL..

Greg Irons skewers the "hip community" in YELLOW DOG No. 17.

George Metzger, on the other hand, is most definitely a comic-strip artist, but not a synthesizer like Crumb and Shelton; he's always poking at and stretching the limitations that are built into the comic strip. In strips like "Master Tyme and Mobius Tripp" and "Mind Blast" in GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE, the panel-to-panel continuity almost vanishes as he keeps three highly distinct protagonists in motion simultaneously, using everything, including the dialogue balloons, visually. In later stories, like "Mal-ig" in GOTHIC BLIMP and YELLOW DOG, he's gone even further, eliminating dialogue entirely and replacing it with visual symbols. As he's done this, he's returned to some extent to a more standard panel breakdown. Because Metzger's departures from tradition are so extreme . . . and his drawing technique is so far from smooth . . . the emphasis in his strips is more on the technical innovations than on the story itself. He doesn't —can't—disguise his experiments well enough. Although Metzger's story-telling **techniques** are more complex than those of Crumb and Shelton, their **stories** are far more complex than Metzger's, because their mastery of their tools is more nearly complete. In other words, those two cartoonists have a much broader range; they can depict a greater variety of characters and emotions, and tell stories that carry a greater impact.

This is especially true of Crumb, and has been ever since the emergence of underground comics. Crumb is the best of the underground cartoonists because he tells better stories than anyone else, and tells them better than anyone else. When he wants to, that is. It's very rare that he tells a story long enough to really exploit the comic strip's potential (or his). More often, he turns out strips as short as a page, and seldom does he go over a few pages for any one story. These stories are usually funny, quirky, sometimes allegorical, turning things upside down in happily vulgar fashion. But their effect is usually about the same . . . with no need to develop his ideas at length, Crumb is content to repeat them over and over, with slightly different trappings. I referred to such stories as "fragments," in FUNNYWORLD No. 10, and that description still holds good. Their top-of-the-head quality is engaging, but ultimately defeating.

Even so, there's a casual, offhand brilliance to Crumb's strips that's fun to watch, even when he's only fiddling around. "It's Really Too Bad" in THE DEPTHS OF DESPAIR, for example, is a little five-page, tongue-in-cheek sermon, illustrated in an astonishing variety of artistic styles, all of them still recognizably Crumb.

I sometimes get the feeling that I'm reading these "fragments" all wrong, and that I should approach them as if they were poetry, or something. But I don't get that feeling very often. Crumb is always telling a story, however fragmentary or obscure that story may be.

Granted, there are exceptions to Crumb's preference for fragments. For example, he has done a couple of stories recently (in the first two issues of MOTOR CITY COMICS), about Lenore Goldberg and her Girl Commandos, that are longer than usual (15 pages) and far more satiric, with the militant feminists and their opponents—in this case, remarkably thick government officials—as his targets.

It's interesting that Crumb should choose militant women for characters. I sometimes wonder what women—especially feminists—must think of Crumb's sex strips, which aren't what you'd call a forthright attack on the double standard. Crumb's women are mostly there for men to enjoy, or else they're hard and aggressive. It seems hard for him to take women very seriously. He's made approving noises about the women's liberation movement (in an interview in THE VILLAGE VOICE last fall), but, usually, his attitude toward women in his strips is one of fond indulgence. In one gentle parody of the romance comic books, his heroine "liberates" herself as many people do, by striking poses. She smokes pot, wears dark glasses and sits naked in yoga positions. But she's really a sweet little thing underneath it all.

(Crumb's attitude toward Negroes is about the same . . . there's no hostility toward them in his strips, but they're often treated more as objects for Crumb's and our amusement than as individuals. It's increasingly hard to believe, as I once did, that Crumb is using his stereotyped Negroes to tell us something about our own racial attitudes.)

But, anyway, to return to the main point, stories like those in MOTOR CITY are exceptions. Crumb is usually content to repeat himself. Maybe this is due to the way Crumb lives, which seems to be as a nomad. I frequently get papers and comic books from other cities that bear evidence of Crumb's passage . . . a sketch here, a one-page strip there, a cover somewhere else. I suppose he doesn't like to stay in one place long enough to sit down and turn out many stories of any length. That's a shame, but that's the way it is. His short stories give us some hint of what we're missing, because they're so well done—the stories move swiftly and surely from panel to panel, with smooth timing, and no confusion about what's happening; the characters are always sharply distinguished (even though Crumb is usually playing with only a limited number of personality types). His drawing style is a lot darker, richer, and heavier than it was a few years ago. He still uses a Rapidograph pen, evidently (that's the kind of technical pen that produces a line of uniform width), but he's doing a lot more with it. His rich, heavy shading and detail are in contrast to the stripped-bare styles modern cartoonists like Schulz and Hart favor. His characters are always solid and very physical, unlike most newspaper and comic-book characters, who are stylized almost to the point of abstraction or else drawn in the old touch-me-me-not-or-I-evaporate illustrator's style. It's a measure of just how good he is that almost everyone who discusses his work comes up with a different set of influences. His work looks "old-fashioned" but no one can agree on which "old-fashioned" cartoonists had the most to do with shaping his style. Billy DeBeck, Elzie Segar, Carl Barks, Basil Wolverton, John Stanley . . . the list is a long one. Anyone whose style seems to reflect that many influences . . . and yet is clearly in thrall to no one of them... has to be a good cartoonist, and a supreme synthesizer.

Crumb has done only one really long story in the last couple of years, and it's that story more than any other that shows us what we're missing by his failure to do more. The story is "Fritz the No-Good," the third of three stories in R. CRUMB'S FRITZ THE CAT (Ballantine, $2.95), an out-sized paperback published late last year. Fritz is the same cat whose earlier adventures (drawn in 1965) were published in CAVALIER in 1968, only now he's out of college, married, a father, and a bum. He falls out with his wife, re-encounters his college sweetheart, gets entangled with a fumbling band of revolutionaries and winds up in jail for a while. Fritz is essentially what he was in college, only without the romantic, poetic facade. His great talent remains rolling with the punch, and avoiding most of the lessons that life tries so hard to teach him. It's his dexterity at this that makes him so funny. Fritz, like Donald Duck and many other great comic characters, is a no-good not because there's malice in him —there's not a trace of it—but because he's so good at kidding himself.

What's more, there's nothing to indicate that Fritz would be a lot better off if he weren't kidding himself. His shield saves him from feeling some pretty hard knocks, and gives him some ersatz joys. Fritz feels free and happy when his wife tosses him out, but a short time later, when this is wearing off, the full impact of his situation is deflected when he and his friend Heinz, a pig, get stonkered on wine.

Heinz also kids himself, but he works harder at it, because he has bad sex problems. (Heinz isn't getting any, nor is he likely to.) In fact, just about everyone Fritz encounters is kidding

FUZ! GLAD YA COULD MAKE IT, MAN!
HOWDY SPICK... I BROUGHT ALONG AN OL' BUDDY O' MINE!!
HE'S A BRIGHT LAD BUT BORED WITH LIFE... HAR HAR... FRITZ, THIS HERE IS "SPICK"... FORMER BIKER AN' SMALL-TIME HOOD TURNED FIGHTER FOR TH' CAUSE!!
TH' CAT HAS A BEAUTIFUL HEAD!!
HMM
ANOTHER CAST-OFF OF THE BOURGEOISIE! ANOTHER MORALLY BANKRUPT SEDENTARY... WELL, WHAT'S THE STATE OF HIS POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS?
PRACTICALLY NIL, I'M AFRAID...
HAW HAW
HMMM!

Copyright Robert Crumb

Fritz's friend Fuz introduces him to his fellow revolutionaries, in "Fritz the No-Good," from R. CRUMB'S FRITZ THE CAT.

himself for some reason or another. Fritz emerges as a funnier and more sympathetic character than any of the others because they would be better off **not** kidding themselves. Heinz' big talk about sex isn't easing his pain, and there's an element of malice in the revolutionaries' self-deception. They aren't going to overthrow any government by blowing up a few things, but they're likely to hurt somebody.

The two sex scenes in the story are funny and to the point. There's nothing in them as explicit as what has been in Crumb's underground comic books, but that's probably because Crumb knew that he was drawing the story for an established publisher. Whether or not there were any restraints put on him before he started drawing (and evidently there weren't), Crumb must have known that a publisher like Viking or Ballantine wouldn't relish a bust for obscenity. As it turned out, Viking rejected the book anyway, after paying Crumb $2,500 in advance, because of those two relatively mild sex scenes, and Ballantine published it instead (according to Crumb in that panel discussion in the OTHER last fall).

In any event, there's no hint in the two scenes that Crumb was on a leash of any kind. In both cases, the joke would be spoiled if we saw too much. In the first scene, when Fritz is in bed with his old girlfriend, Winston, the dialogue is all-important. In the second scene, when Fritz is copulating with a girl horse (no joke) while the revolutionaries plot, it's important that we not be sure until the crucial panel just what Fritz is doing . . . and when the crucial panel **is** reached, we're told what's happening by the characters' facial expressions (they're both climaxing), rather than by a shot of their pelvises. Crumb meets and defeats the restrictions imposed upon him, purely through artistic means. There's no hint of any strain. Whatever resentment he might have felt, he put telling a good story first. Carl Barks achieved this sort of triumph time and time again, and it's good to see someone else do it. Of course, it's best when there are no external restrictions, but second best is seeing an artist assert himself even when he's tied down.

The sad thing is, Crumb seems unwilling to impose any restrictions on himself. Whatever pops into his head goes down on paper. Mike Britt, in CAPA-alpha, told of visiting Crumb while "Fritz the No-Good" was being drawn, and of Crumb's reluctance to draw the story. It's his finest achievement of the last few years—and he didn't want to do it.

Crumb feels he's outgrown Fritz, and he's right, in one sense. It doesn't make any difference in the story that Fritz is a cat instead of a human being; it doesn't make any difference that Fritz is a continuing character, one who has been used in other stories. In fact, it probably would be a mistake for Crumb to do any more Fritz stories, since Fritz' personality has already been explored so thoroughly. Any new Fritz stories likely would involve telling the same jokes again, just as with Crumb's sex pages. But the same would be true if the characters in "Fritz the No-Good" were human characters who hadn't been used in any stories before. What counts is the story itself, and how Crumb develops his characters through their facial expressions, movements and dialogue, and how he breaks his story into panels, writing and illustrating in what the Thompsons have called "sentences and paragraphs." (I don't like to talk about a comic strip in those terms, really, but there simply isn't much of a critical vocabulary available for people who want to talk about the way comic strips are put together.) If Crumb thinks he's outgrown telling well-developed stories of more than a few pages in length, then he's wrong, and it's too bad.

Fortunately, other cartoonists are around, if not exactly to fill the breach, then at least to give us something else to laugh at. Gilbert Shelton is outstanding among them. I used not to like Shelton's strips, especially those with Wonder Wart-Hog, who has been an anchronism for years. As I said back in FUNNYWORLD No. 10, the Hog was irreverent and not much else, and so lost what little luster he had when even more irreverent strips came along. Shelton still draws a Hog strip now and again, recently trying to make them more underground (I guess) by having the Hog of Steel rape Lois Lamebrain with his snout, and like that. It's kind of embarrassing.

But Shelton has been doing other, vastly better strips that **do** work, especially his stories about a trio of potheads called the Furry Freak Brothers. If anything, these strips are funnier than Crumb's—Shelton has become a genius at comic exaggeration, and as Art Scott says, Shelton's comic timing is superb. ("Timing" is something else that's a little difficult to explain when you're talking about a comic strip. I tried talking about it at length in FUNNYWORLD No. 9, but no one else picked up the idea.) Shelton's range doesn't seem to be as great as Crumb's—as Scott says, he lacks that "wild imagination"—but that may be only because he hasn't **tried** as many different kinds of strips, not because he can't do them. His short stories (usually only a page) are more satisfying than most of Crumb's, since

they're structured like the best of the old Sunday comics pages, moving rapidly to and from a climactic gag. They seem complete in themselves (although they gain from being read in the company of Shelton's other strips), whereas Crumb's stories often seem like studies for something longer. Even Crumb's stories about Mr. Natural, the cranky and capitalistic old guru—closest in spirit to Shelton's strips, probably—aren't as satisfying as Shelton's best. When Shelton does do a longer story—like "The Freaks Pull a Heist," in RADICAL AMERICA KOMIKS—it's just as well structured, and fantastically funny.

Shelton's drawing style is no longer tight and nervous, as it was only a couple of years ago. As his drawing has become looser and more plastic, his satire has become much more pointed, far removed from the old bludgeoning days of Wonder Wart Hog. It's become more compassionate, too, free of the callousness that passes for sophistication in a lot of undergraduate publications (in one of which the Hog made his debut). Shelton's characters are less and less stereotypes and more and more individuals, although he has some way to go to match Crumb's understanding of how people's minds and emotions work. No other underground cartoonist has gotten so good so fast as Shelton, and no other is so interesting to watch.

Jay Lynch is a less interesting cartoonist, because his work is more obviously derived from "old-timey" comic strips, and his stories usually more conventional, although funny. But he's growing almost as rapidly as Shelton, and certainly more rapidly than Crumb. His greatest achievement may be that he's the editor of BIJOU FUNNIES, one of the best of the underground comics. It's hard not to love a comic book with a line like this (in a Skip Williamson page called "Class War Comics"): "Eat leaden death, imperialistic reactionary business administration majors!"

There's plenty of reason for hope in today's underground comics, despite the high tide of sludge that's lapping at the feet of the few really good cartoonists. Things would get even better if Crumb, the best of them all, got bored with the easy stuff he's doing now, and tackled something a little tougher.

THOSE FABULOUS FURRY
FREAK
BROTHERS
COME ON, YOU CAN'T QUIT NOW— THE BANK'S JUST NEXT DOOR!
NO, WAIT! I'M GONNA ROB THIS CANDY STORE FIRST!
HEY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO— I'VE NEVER BEEN INSIDE A BANK BEFORE...
THE FREAKS PULL A HEIST!
OUR STORY BEGINS IN THE LUSH DIGS OF THE FAMOUS HIRSUTE TRIO...
...LOOKS LIKE WE'RE OUT OF MONEY AGAIN!
WELL, THAT'S ALL REET...
...WE HAVE PLENTY OF GRASS, AND AS WE ALL KNOW, DOPE WILL GET YOU THROUGH TIMES OF NO MONEY BETTER THAN MONEY WILL GET YOU THROUGH TIMES OF NO DOPE!

Copyright Radical America

Gilbert Shelton's fabulous, furry—and funny—Freak Brothers, in RADICAL AMERICA KOMIKS.

COMMENTS

Last issue, I included comments from readers in the section devoted to underground comics. A number of people liked that idea, so I.m doing it again.

From CARL BARKS: FRITZ THE CAT arrived safely, and I've read it from cover to cover. I agree that Robert Crumb is a master of characterization and dialogue. No doubt he could write other styles besides satire, but as long as he has fun poking fun that should be his main output. His Fritz in the third story is several guys I've known in my long square life. Utter bounders and cads, the dastards! How I envied them.

Particularly I noticed that Crumb's underlying message in all the stories is that nothing is important enough to be taken seriously. This was a message I often sneaked into my duck stories, and that probably is an element of similarity you and the Thompsons see in his writing and mine.

From BOB ABEL: Several people have sent me FUNNYWORLD No. 11—I'll make sure I get forthcoming issues by subscribing—and I want to thank you for the commentary on the piece in CAVALIER. It was most generous, although I'd like to offer a considerable bitch at your calling me Robert Abel. That was my parents' idea, but my by-line has consistently been Bob Abel, and I really wish you'd not taken liberties with it. I had to use Robert on the book I co-edited, THE FUNNIES: AN AMERICAN IDIOM, because my co-editor's name is David Manning White and you sorta got to

(Continued on Page 47)

A list of most of the available underground comics can be had for a stamped, self-addressed envelope from the San Francisco Comic Book Company, 3339 Twenty-third Street, San Francisco, California.

BOB CLAMPETT:

an interview with a master cartoon maker and puppeteer

Milton Gray and I recorded an interview with Bob Clampett at his office in Hollywood on June 6, 1969. Bob's wife, Sody, was also present. The interview as published here is a distillation of the five hours of tape we recorded that day, plus a number of additional questions that were asked and answered in writing in the months after the taping session. The interview will be published in two parts. This first part stresses Clampett's career at the Warner Brothers cartoon studio. The second part, to be published in FUNNYWORLD No. 14, will deal primarily with "Time for Beany" and Clampett's other television programs.

—MIKE BARRIER

BARRIER: What was the first Warner Brothers cartoon you worked on?

CLAMPETT: I helped animate the first Merrie Melodie ever made.

BARRIER: You must have been quite young. Can you remember when you first began cartooning?

CLAMPETT: I can't remember when I didn't. When I was in school, I drew a full-page comic about the nocturnal adventures of a pussycat that was published in color in the Los Angeles Sunday TIMES. King Features saw this and offered me a cartoonist's contract to start at seventy-five dollars a week when I finished high school.

They let me work in their L. A. art department on Saturdays and vacations. I had a drawing board between Webb Smith, who later became a key Disney gagman, the one who's credited with the classic Pluto flypaper sequence, and Robert Day, later of THE NEW YORKER magazine. I learned a lot from those two fine craftsmen. And from time to time the paper published one of my cartoons for encouragement.

They also paid my way through Otis Art Institute, where I learned to paint with oils and to sculpt.

BARRIER: Did you go with King Features when you finished school?

CLAMPETT: No. I became so enchanted with the new medium of sound cartoons that I gave up the seventy-five dollars a week to join Warner Brothers cartoons for ten dollars a week.

BARRIER: That was for Harman-Ising, wasn't it?

CLAMPETT: Yes. Hugh and Rudy started Warner Brothers cartoons. Here's a photo of them taken just a couple of years before I joined them, when they, Ub Iwerks, Walker Harman and "Ham" Hamilton were almost the Disney Brothers' whole staff in the making of the "Alice in Cartoonland" series.

Hugh and Rudy left Disney and made the Oswalds for Mintz after Walt lost the character. Then they made the first talking-sync cartoon, a short sales film titled "Bosko the Talk-ink Kid." Rudy appeared in live action combined with Bosko, who at the end went back into the inkwell and said, "So long, folks!", which was the origination of the present "That's all, folks!" end title.

Leon Schlesinger, who was the proprietor of Pacific Art And Title, and a close friend of the Warners, liked their film and got them the Warner Brothers release.

BARRIER: Harman-Ising were independent producers, weren't they, distributing their pictures through Warner's?

CLAMPETT: Yes. And Leon Schlesinger had screen credit as their associate producer. Leon's brother-in-law, Ray Katz, was the business manager at H and I. He handed out the raises and pencil leads—each with equal reluctance.

BARRIER: Why did you choose to work for Warner's rather than Disney?

CLAMPETT: Actually, I was working for Walt just a month or two before I joined Warner's. Not in his cartoon studio—but in his doll factory.

The first time I ever met Walt Disney was when I walked into his studio on Hyperion carrying the first felt Mickey Mouse doll, which my "Aunt" Charlotte Clark and I had made.

BARRIER: How did this come about?

CLAMPETT: Well, I had made and performed with my own hand puppets since I was a kid. Before I even reached my teens, I made my first Cecil the Sea Serpent stocking puppet, with my mother's help, and many others. Mrs. Clark, who sold cookies from store to store, thought she could sell an appealing doll if I would design one.

I suggested a doll based on the new mouse character that was beginning to be so popular in the movies. I couldn't find a drawing of him anywhere. The local theater, newspapers, stores—no one had a drawing of Mickey Mouse! So, I took my sketch pad to the theater, and sat through several shows. I came out with sketches of Mickey, and Charlotte and I used them when we made the first Mickey Mouse doll.

My dad walked in and said, "Wait just a darn minute! You can't sell that without permission from the copyright owner." So, he drove us to the Disney studio, which was then quite small. Walt and Roy were delighted, and they set Charlotte up in business in a house near the studio. We turned out Meece by the gross.

In my spare time, I went there and worked a kapok machine, a foot-operated machine that brushed the stuffing off the Mickey Mouse dolls. There were six young French girls who did the sewing. I used to put my hand in the unstuffed dolls and amuse them by talking in the Mickey falsetto.

Walt Disney himself sometimes came over in an old car to pick up the dolls; he would give them out to visitors to the studio and at sales meetings. I helped him load the dolls in the car. One time his car, loaded with Mickeys, wouldn't start, and I pushed while Walt steered, until it caught, and he took off.

BARRIER: Then you went with Harman-Ising. Who originated the title "Looney Tunes"?

CLAMPETT: Hugh told me that Leon himself came up with the name "Looney Tunes," and later "Merrie Melodies."

BARRIER: Was that a takeoff on the "Silly Symphonies" title?

CLAMPETT: Could be, but at that time, the whole gimmick was music in cartoons. The main reason that Warner's okayed the Looney Tunes deal was that they thought it would promote the songs they owned, from their movie musicals. When I started there, the rule was that we had to have a singing chorus in every Merrie Melodie. We'd have a great story going along, but then we'd have to stop and have the singing chorus.

The first Looney Tune that Hugh and Rudy made was "Sinkin' in the Bathtub," which featured Tiny Tim's favorite song, "Tiptoe Through the Tulips." After the first few Looney Tunes, the studio moved to a rather modern suite of offices, on Hollywood Boulevard, that was owned by Cecil B. DeMille. That was where I joined them. They gave me a desk in the same office with Rudy Ising.

The first few Looney Tunes shown in 1930 made such a hit that Hugh and Rudy started Merrie Melodies early in 1931, which was just as I joined them. And they gave me a number of secondary characters to animate in the very first Merrie Melodie, "Lady Play Your Mandolin."

We made the Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies at Harman-Ising until near mid-1933, when they split with Leon.

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The staff of the Walt Disney studio in the Twenties, when Disney was making the "Alice in Cartoonland" series. From left to right: Rollin (Ham) Hamilton, Roy O. Disney, Hugh Harman, Walt Disney, the girl who played Alice, Rudolf Ising, Ub Iwerks and Walker Harman. ©Walt Disney Productions

The first week I was at the studio, a meeting of the entire staff was called to shore up the story for Merrie Melodie No. 2. It revolved around a streetcar, and they needed a fresh and novel way to gag up the usual singing chorus. Nothing much came out of the meeting, but riding home on the streetcar, I hit on an idea.

I submitted a sequence in which the streetcar's advertising cards—the Smith Brothers, Dutch Cleanser girl, and other famous trademark figures—came to life and satirized the song. My idea was used, and made a tremendous hit in the theaters. A critic called it the first original Warner Brothers cartoon formula, as distinguished from Disney. We followed it with magazine covers, grocery store labels, and on and on. After that, Hugh kept calling me in from animation for story meetings, and encouraged me to turn in ideas.

The funniest cartoons we drew at the studio were done just to amuse ourselves, and most of them never reached the screen. But a few of them did.

BARRIER: For example?

CLAMPETT: Well, every day I used to draw caricatures of my immediate boss, Larry Martin, portraying him as a mustachioed, hook-nosed, toothy villain, replete with dirty laugh. Years later, I used these caricatures as the model for my "Time for Beany" villain, Dishonest John.

When this same Larry offered to animate some scenes for me on the first Beany and Cecil cartoon, I gave him a sequence of Dishonest John to do. When he asked for model sheets to work from, I told him, "just look in the mirror. You were my model for D.J." He got quite a kick out of that.

Also, back in 1931 Rudy Ising went hunting one weekend. The following Monday, he told in all seriousness of how he tried to shoot this rabbit, and every time he got a bead on it, it would disappear, and then pop up behind him. And so on.

The more he told of his troubles with this consarned rabbit, the more hilarious it became, perhaps because he was a boss. Several of us made caricatures of him in a hunter's outfit, tracking down the rabbit.

Here, I'll show you one of those 1931 sketches on which I changed the original inscription of "Rudy Rabbit" to "Wudy Wabbit."

During the ensuing month or two, I thought up a steady stream of "wabbit" hunting jokes, some of which reached the screen seven years later in the first Bugs Bunny cartoon.

Leon Schlesinger in 1928, in his office at Pacific Art and Title.

BARRIER: What were some of the other cartoons you helped gag at Harman-Ising?

CLAMPETT: "Bosko in Person," "The Dish Ran Away with the Spoon," "Shuffle Off to Buffalo," and "I Like Mountain Music," which was the magazine covers coming to life, and was such a hit that it opened at the Grauman's Chinese Theater with a stage prologue and "Gold Diggers of 1933." Quite an honor at that time.

BARRIER: When Harman and Ising split with Schlesinger in 1933, Schlesinger must have had to organize a whole new studio.

CLAMPETT: Right, and he had a terrible mess at the beginning. Leon took over a building on the Warner Brothers Sunset lot, put in a lot of unpainted desks—they smelled like fresh pine—and set about recruiting a staff away from his competitors.

Jack King, who was one of the key men on Disney's "The Three Little Pigs," was hired as head cartoonist. I was the first one of the original Merrie Melodies staff that Leon signed to a contract. I was put with Jack King and the two of us for a short time sat alone in this big building. At the same time, Leon was making low-budget John Wayne westerns, so young "Duke" would come ambling in and look over our shoulders.

Bosko went with Harman-Ising, so all Leon had were the titles "Looney Tunes," "Merrie Melodies," and "That's All, Folks!". But, no characters.

For Leon's first Looney Tune, a former Harman-Ising gag man named Earl Duvall created the character Buddy, whom I used to call "Bosko in whiteface," because he had the same routines as Bosko—the dog, the girlfriend, the same routines. The first Looney Tune had to be remade three times, to make it acceptable to Warner's.

Across the alley from us were sound stages, above which were the dressing rooms used by Busby Berkeley's Gold Digger chorus girls. Al Jolson's dressing room was in our building, and Cagney, Bogart, and other top Warner stars used to stick their heads in our windows to see how cartoons were made. We patterned a lot of things on them.

Our first color Merrie Melodie, "Honeymoon Hotel," was directed by Duvall. It was around the fourth Merrie Melodie that we made at Leon's.

I was followed after several months by Friz Freleng, Ham Hamilton, Bob McKimson, Tubby Millar and Paul Smith, who is now directing the Woody Woodpeckers for Lantz. Then Tash—Frank Tashlin—came from Van Beuren's in New York, and Chuck Jones, who was still in-betweening, came from

Iwerks, and Cal Dalton came from Ted Eshbaugh's "The Wizard of Oz." We had the greatest divergence of styles—everybody drew Buddy differently.

The Looney Tunes were a series of Buddy pictures, and the Merrie Melodies were different each time—a different song with a different subject. Friz directed the majority of those.

BARRIER: The story men don't seem to have been assigned to particular units. Were they assigned to different directors or were they working with all of them?

CLAMPETT: At one time, Leon had what he called a gag department—a large group of gag men all in one big room. A director would go in there and they would help him gag his cartoon. Eventually, it boiled down to where certain gag men were paired off with certain directors. But, we did trade around.

BARRIER: In the early days, though, the animators were assigned to directors, weren't they? There never was a time when they worked for different directors at the same time?

CLAMPETT: Yes, there was. I can remember when, around 1934, a director got ready to hand out a picture, and then all we animators in the studio would go to him for scenes.

For the first several years, Leon had a terrible time finding directors capable of making truly humorous cartoons. Too many of the shorts would elicit only one or two polite laughs in the theater. So, Leon was in there in his shirt sleeves, trying to find the right talent, promoting those that showed promise, and encouraging everyone to come up with funny ideas and characters. After five years of Looney Tunes, Leon still didn't have **one** well known cartoon character. And it was becoming a bit of a crisis.

Then, Leon himself had an idea. He said, "Look, Hal Roach has Our Gang, which is very popular. A bunch of little kids doing things together." So, we had a big studio-wide drive to get ideas for our own animal Our Gang. In one of the sessions, I brought up the point that in Roach's Our Gang comedies there was always a little fat boy and a little black boy who was named after something to eat . . . Farina, or Buckwheat. So, somebody, I don't remember who, thought of two puppies called "Ham and Ex." That started me thinking. And after dinner one night, I thought of the name "Porky and Beans."

I made a drawing of this fat little pig, which I named Porky, and a little black cat named Beans. Under the drawing, in imitation of the lettering on a can of "Campbell's Pork and Beans," I wrote "Clampett's Porky and Beans," and turned it in. Everyone liked my idea and Porky and Beans were made members of the gang. Mike, you asked in

Walt and Roy Disney with one of their first Academy Awards—and one of the Mickey Mouse dolls that Bob Clampett helped design and produce.

©Walt Disney Productions

Clampett's first use of the word "wabbit," a word popularized years later by a gentleman named Fudd.

The first Porky Pig model sheet. Porky's pose is taken from the scene in "I Haven't Got a Hat" in which he is stuttering, stuck on a word in his recitation.

FUNNYWORLD what was the first Porky cartoon—and what was the first color Porky? Well, this cartoon was it. It was titled "I Haven't Got a Hat," which was the title of the featured song.

There was a fellow who used to come around the studio, and he actually stuttered. He couldn't help it. At that time, Roscoe Ates was quite a popular stuttering comedian in feature pictures, so it was decided to speed the voice of this fellow, and he was our first voice of Porky. In this first Porky cartoon, we had each little animal in school reciting his piece. Porky recited "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere," and he had an awful time with it. Porky was very laughable, but even more important, he had a touch of Chaplinesque pathos about him. The audience at the same time laughed at and felt sympathy for Porky Pig. He was our first full-fledged star.

About the same time as the first Porky story, Leon announced a studio-wide contest, with a money prize to whichever member of the staff turned in the best original story. So many of us entered the contest that the animation footage went down. My story, which was about a rabbit family, won first prize, and was made as "My Green Fedora."

This gave me a big boost, since I'd just originated a couple of characters (Porky and Beans) and now I'd won the story contest. So, from there on out I kept flooding Leon's desk with story ideas, which I submitted in sketch form. These early story contributions of mine were filmed under Friz's direction.

At that moment, Tex Avery came through the door for the first time. Tex was working for Lantz. And Leon, who only had two units at the time, needed another unit. As Tex was negotiating with Leon, everybody in the studio was asking, "What's happening? Is somebody going to be let out?"

Leon made a deal with Tex, and then called me in and said, "Bob, I want you to be Tex's collaborator. You go with Tex. The two of you start a unit in the middle of the lot"—in a little wooden building which we named "Termite Terrace." We were right across from radio station KFWB. There was a sly-eyed cowboy named Leonard Slye who walked by our window every day as a member of the "Sons of the Pioneers" singing group. I swore he would make a

Clampett and Avery on their way to form a new unit: a watercolor by some anonymous artist at the Schlesinger studio.

perfect movie villain. Shortly after, he did get a movie contract, and they changed his name to Roy Rogers.

So Tex and I started production in 1935. Tex had already written the first story by himself, featuring Beans and some of our other characters. It was a gold-mining picture and, as a takeoff on Busby Berkeley's "Gold Diggers of 1935," I suggested the title "Gold Diggers of '49." Which Tex liked and used.

Tex was a great story man, and a great gag man. He's even funnier than his pictures. He's very likable personally and looked a little like a good-looking Porky. A very nice guy, and a great innovator. One thing I particularly liked about Tex was that unlike some of the other directors I gagged for there, he was receptive to ideas. If you had an idea that he liked, he would say so. If he didn't like it, he'd tell you why.

I was supposed to help Tex with his stories. He'd almost always originate the angle himself, and then he and I would work together gagging the stories. Tex directed. I would sometimes help him with the layouts, and then animate. Tex's first cartoons were all funny, and all good. He made color cartoons as well as black and white.

At this time we still had only one star, Porky Pig. So we were looking for another star. At this time, Tex came up with the idea of Porky going on a duck hunt, wherein the hunter would try to get the ducks but they would always turn the tables on him. We thought of a ream of gags—they happened to come easy—and we had all these crazy ducks. After we boiled it down, we had two or three times as many gags as we needed. I asked Tex, "What if instead of all these ducks being crazy, you consolidated most of them into one comic relief character?" Tex did that, and when he did, he created Daffy Duck, who turned out to be the second hit character that we had. That first Daffy Duck cartoon was called "Porky's Duck Hunt."

As with all characters, the first Daffy didn't look or talk exactly like the later one, but that certain magic was there. Tex put a voice on him that was rather bombastic, with "woo-woos" inspired by a Warner comedian, Hugh Herbert.

Tex gave me the first scene of Daffy to animate. In this scene, Porky confronts Daffy, who in trying to explain he's harmless says, "I'm just a crazy darn fool duck" and then was to swim off across the water. Tex told me, "Make him exit funny." I asked, "Can I do anything I want?" And he said "Yes—anything." So I had Daffy cross his eyes, do a Stan Laurel jump, and then do cartwheels, and do a ballet pirouette, and bounce on his head, and so forth.

Now, at that time, audiences weren't accustomed to seeing a cartoon character do these things. And so, when it hit

THE EVOLUTION OF DAFFY DUCK: The model sheet for "Porky's Duck Hunt," drawn by Tex Avery.

The layout Tex Avery gave to Clampett to use in drawing his first Daffy Duck scene.

the theaters it was like an explosion. People would leave the theaters talking about this daffy duck.

We had a bit of a problem finding just the right name for him. We were sure to get criticism from the public if we called somebody imbecilic. Porky's stuttering was criticized. One of the first names suggested for our duck was "Dizzy," after the famous baseball player, Dizzy Dean. But Leon said, "No, you can't call him Dizzy—it sounds as if he's going to faint." And then we thought of Dizzy Dean's brother who also played ball—Daffy Dean. And thus Daffy Duck was named. The name was used for the first time in the title of Tex's second duck-hunt picture, and the first in color, "Daffy Duck and Egghead."

BARRIER: Television was in its first experimental stages back in the Thirties, when you were at Warner's. Did you feel any interest in television at that time?

CLAMPETT: In 1935, when I was at Termite Terrace, I went during my summer vacation to the San Diego International Exposition. And in the Palace of Science they had something I'd never seen before—called television." I wanted to see how cartoons would look on TV, so I made some quick sketches and had them held up to the camera side so I could see them on the viewer. Then I went and got my Cecil hand puppet from the glove compartment of my car, and made him talk to the newfangled contraption. A crowd gathered and was quite amused. That was the first time Cecil was ever on television.

BARRIER: Just when did you become a director at Warner's?

CLAMPETT: At the end of 1936. Leon gave me a color cartoon sequence in a Joe E. Brown feature picture called "When's Your Birthday?" It featured all the signs of the zodiac as cartoon characters.

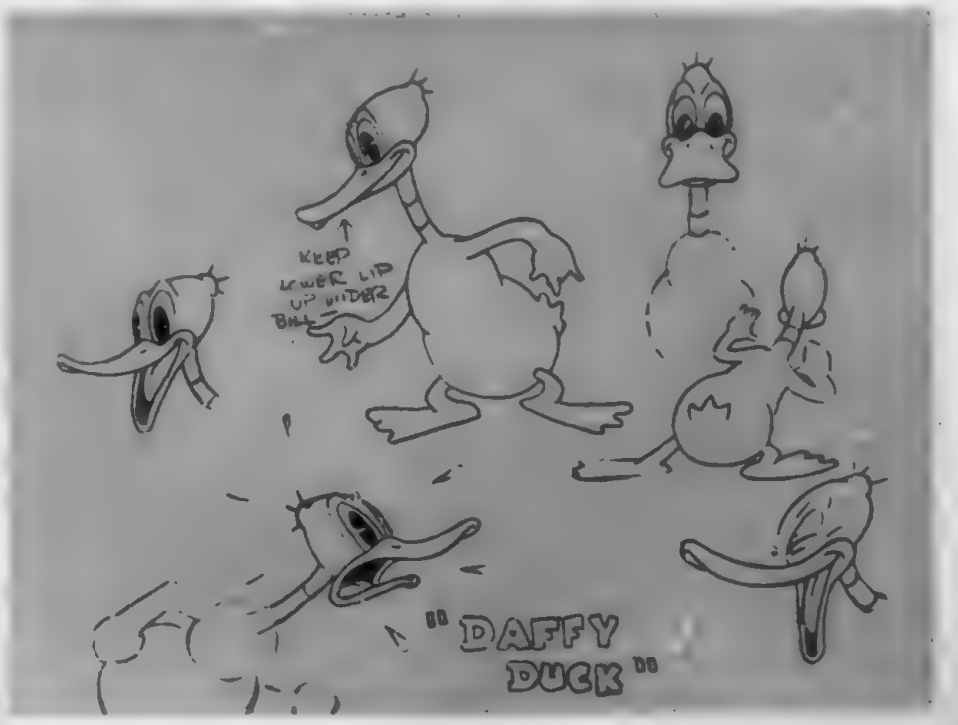
That was the first time I officially directed at Warner Brothers, but I had made several commercials all by myself while I was still at Harman-Ising, and earlier in '36 I was directing a film of my own, based on Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan and Mars stories, in full animation. I wanted to do something quite imaginative, with tongue-in-cheek humor throughout. I directed a sales film, which Chuck helped me animate and Bobo [Robert Cannon] in-betweened. In fact, I filmed Bobo in live action as the hero—he was very heroically built, all shoulders and no hips. I filmed him in Griffith Park, and we Rotoscoped part of it. I was planning to leave Warner's to make that series on my own, but Leon said, "I'll give you direction and more money if you will stay."

Ub Iwerks, who was famed for having done all the drawings in Walt's first Mickey Mouse cartoon, had a studio out in Beverly Hills, and he came to the end of his contract in late 1936. Leon needed more pictures, so he in effect said, "Look, Ub, make some Porkys for me in your own plant." Then Leon called me in and said, "You know our characters, Porky was your creation . . . ," and he sent me to help Ub make the Porkys. Leon's brother-in-law, Ray Katz, came along as the business manager.

Ub made a couple of pictures, and then one Monday morning when I walked in they told me, "Ub's gone. You're the director now." I had to sit

An animation drawing from Clampett's first Daffy Duck scene.

The second Daffy Duck model sheet, drawn after he had been given his name.



down at Ub's desk, in Ub's chair, with Ub's stopwatch, to make my first cartoon. All of Ub's old staff were looking at me like, "What the blazes are you doing sitting in Ub's chair?" I felt the same way, because we all revered him.

BARRIER: What was the title of your first cartoon?

CLAMPETT: I called it "Porky's Badtime Story." I originally titled this cartoon "It Happened All Night," after Capra's Oscar-winning movie, "It Happened One Night." They said that sounded risque, and asked me to think up another title.

On my next cartoon, I had no gag man. So, I wrote and sketched the next Porky story "by self," and called it "Get Rich Quick Porky."

I created a couple of new characters for this story. One of them was an oily villain named "Honest John," but the one who stole the picture was my little gopher, who came up out of a hole in the ground and did feats of magic.

I used to perform a magic act when I was in school, and I was always fascinated with sleight of hand. So, in this cartoon, each time a dog tried to bury a bone in the ground, I'd have my gopher take the bone and perform sophisticated sleight-of-hand tricks with it—making it disappear and appear again, much to the dog's consternation.

One of the ways I had the gopher coming up out of the ground was to have the earth bulge, then pop open, as the gopher came up in a "spin" action, then settling down into his by-play with the dog. When this film played the theaters, my friends called me regarding the little magician character, whom they loved. But nobody quite knew what he was, referring to him as the groundhog, the prairie dog, and whatnot. So, for the follow-up story, I decided to transform my gopher into a magician's white rabbit, which gave me all the wonderful magician's props to work with. I started sketching a new story with just my dog and white rabbit—who came out of a silk hat instead of a hole in the ground—and again used his magic to outwit the dog. I didn't want to clutter up the situation with Porky, but Katz insisted he be the prime character in every Looney Tune, so I put my story aside for later use as a Merrie Melodie.

BARRIER: The first Porky Pig cartoon was made before Mel Blanc came along. Was Porky's first voice similar to the one Blanc did, or was it markedly different?

CLAMPETT: Originally, Mel matched our established Porky voice, and then went on to do it much better.

BARRIER: I was wondering if Blanc gave the Porky voice new twists.

CLAMPETT: Definitely. The original fellow would get stuck, stuttering in the wrong places. But with a pro like Mel we could give him much better lines to say. For example, we'd have Porky say variations of the basic switch joke, "I'm g-g-g-going to P-P-P-Pasade—aden—I'm g-g-g-going to P-P-P-Pasade—aden—(heh, heh)—I'm going to Glendale."

BARRIER: What did Harman-Ising do after they parted company with Schlesinger?

CLAMPETT: Well, first they made a couple of Cubby Bear cartoons for Van Beuren, and then they became independent producers for MGM.

In 1935, Hugh made "The Lost Chick," which won the Brussels Award. Rudy created Little Cheeser in 1936. Hugh did "The Old Millpond" in 1937; it won the exhibitors' award as best cartoon of that year. Hugh made some Boskos in color, one of which introduced an original hit tune, "Eastertime Is the Time for Eggs, and the Time for Eggs is Eastertime." Then, they made "Merbabies" for Disney. (They filmed this two blocks up from my studio, in the building that is now Walter Lantz Productions, and in the Twenties was the lab that developed Disney's early cartoons.) In 1938, they signed as MGM contract producers and moved onto the lot. There, Rudy created Barney Bear, who did a wonderful Edgar Kennedy slow burn. Rudy made a cartoon that started a trend—one character in a cave. It was called "The Bear That Couldn't Sleep." In 1940, Rudy made "The Milky Way," which won the Oscar. They had seven Oscar nominations. And Hugh made the antiwar "Peace on Earth," which was nominated for an Oscar and the Nobel Peace Prize.

Then in 1942, Rudy went to the Roach studio, where he was the officer in charge of all animation and training films for the Air Force, over one hundred and fifty service and civil service people, including John Hubley and some of our boys. I used to visit them there.

BARRIER: Carl Stalling was one of Disney's original key men also, wasn't he?

CLAMPETT: Yes, Carl Stalling was Disney's original musician at the studio, and was with Iwerks in Beverly Hills when I arrived there. So when I took over from Ub as director, and then brought the unit back to the Warner Hollywood lot, Carl came with me. He did the score on the first films I made there, and then all the films we made when we moved back on the Warner lot.

BARRIER: When you worked with Carl Stalling, how much direction did you give him as to the kind of music you wanted?

CLAMPETT: Well, we didn't work quite that way. When I completed a story, I would take my finished story board to Carl's music room. I would act out the entire story for Carl, illustrating where I wanted various moods in the music, changes of tempo, etc. Carl would suggest using particular pieces of music to me, and I would say, "No, I want a type of feeling like this," and he would say "Then, how about this?" So, I would sit with Carl and we would plan what tempos and what tunes we were going to use throughout the picture. Carl would be at the piano, and if he had an idea he would play it for me. He was a wonderful guy, no temperament, he'd just work wonderfully with you.

When you read in THE DISNEY VERSION that there was an organist in Kansas City who loaned Walt money at a critical time . . . that was Carl Stalling. Carl is a fellow who has devoted his lifetime to cartoons and yet, he wasn't mentioned by name. Just called "the organist."

Carl told me that Walt at one time offered him thirty per cent of the "Silly Symphonies."

BARRIER: That's strange, I'd never heard that.

The young Bob Clampett, performing sleight of hand, in a frame from a 16mm film.

CLAMPETT: But then, sometime later, things were looking so bad, Carl said, the general talk was that Walt was going broke. So, Carl went with Van Beuren's, thereby losing his percentage. Carl's parting shot to me was, "Walt went broke in reverse!"

Hugh also told me some interesting things about Walt in the early days. Hugh said his brother Fred Harman, who later created the "Red Ryder" comic strip, and Walt were partners in a little cartoon studio in Kansas City. And Hugh and Walt were partners in the making of the first "Alice in Cartoonland" film, which the two of them finished all by themselves back there.

Hugh said that when he was animating on the "Alice" series for Walt in Hollywood, Walt was searching for characters, and looked up to Pat Sullivan's Felix the Cat and Paul Terry's cat in the "Aesop's Fables." Walt put a cat named Julius in "Alice," but he had very little character. Walt then made Oswald the Rabbit, who, according to Hugh, had no character . . . just images.

Walt had a penchant for a mouse as a character, Hugh continued. Walt proposed calling the first one Mortimer Mouse, and then changed this mouse's name to Mickey. Hugh said the first drawings of Mickey didn't look anything like those of two years later. Mickey was gradually refined.

BARRIER: Tell us what you know of how some of the other key Warner Brothers characters came into being.

CLAMPETT: Well, I remember when Leon called us in and said he thought Porky should have a girl friend. And Tash got busy and created the character Petunia.

BARRIER: She wasn't used in many cartoons, was she?

CLAMPETT: Not too many. But, see these ceramic figurines of all the Bugs Bunny cast of characters on my sideboard. I put these out for sales to stores around 1940, for which I received a percentage. That photo there is of the original clay models from which the figurines were cast. And here's Petunia. She was important enough at that time to be a ceramic.

I was working with Tex when he created Egghead, a little man with a bulbous nose, derby, and a costume patterned somewhat after that of Ben Blue, the nightclub comic. Some of us, including Tex, thought Egghead was a little gross. So, Tex changed his name, gave him a nose job and facial, and that was how Elmer Fudd was developed.

BARRIER: In an Avery cartoon called "A Feud There Was," Elmer is identified on a little satchel that says, "Elmer Dudd, Peacemaker," and I was wondering if that was the first appearance of Elmer.

CLAMPETT: Well, the "Elmer" name

Bosko as he looked when Clampett began work at the Harman-Ising studio in 1931.

change preceded the development of the final likeness. Tex and I and one of the gag men had a session in which we talked about how to "cuten up" the character. I have a sketch that was done at that meeting. We used an earlier model sheet, and as we talked checks were put by the derby, the high collar and the clothes, indicating they should be kept. But, on the face you can see where Tex sketched a smaller nose and indicated other changes. This was the beginning of the final, "cuter" Elmer.

During 1937, I became very enthused about the newest trend in feature film comedy, where, in place of comedians in baggy pants, normal-appearing actors were performing hilarious comedy in a more underplayed and sophisticated manner. But, when you least expected it, there would be a broad comedy breakout. These films, which began with "My Man Godfrey," were known in the trade as "screwball" comedies.

I was looking for a character with which to try and capture the brash but sophisticated spirit of this new comedy style.

Then, in early 1938, one of Leon's units was having story trouble. They had started a story that covered a number of boards and had lots of characters in it. They had a lot of good material, but somehow it wasn't jelling. Leon called me into the office, and asked me if I had any two- or three-character story ideas that were very simple and could go into production quickly. I'm sure he asked the same thing of others. As I recall, there was only a week or so before it had to go to the animators.

So, I looked in my desk drawer, and among my other story sketches, I found this big pile of gags that we didn't use in "Pork's Duck Hunt." Now, the second Daffy Duck hunt cartoon was going over big in the theaters, so I went to Leon and I said, "I've got all these great hunting gags left over from the first duck-hunt picture. I could organize them, put in a little new material and have you a story in just a few days." Leon said, "I don't want to give Warner's another duck-hunt picture so soon." I said, "What do you object to, another hunting picture?" He said, "No, I just don't want another duck hunt." I said, "Maybe I'll get an idea."

This was on a Friday afternoon. So I took these sketches with me, and driving home I mulled over what else I could do with these gags. Should I switch it into a quail hunt? Or a fox hunt? Or a . . .? And then, recalling some of my 1931 "wabbit" and hunter gags . . . I settled on making him a rabbit.

After dinner, I began putting the duck sketches on my light board, intending to just draw the rabbit doing the duck's actions and gags. But, I found that the rabbit simply refused to do the same things that Daffy did. It just didn't feel right. And as my work progressed into the early morning hours the rabbit took on a personality of his own. I had found the character I was looking for. This was the birth of Bugs Bunny.

I worked on the sketches all that weekend, showed them to my folks for their reaction, and delivered them to Leon Monday morning. He chuckled through it, thought it was pretty funny stuff, and assigned it to the Ben Hardaway-Cal Dalton unit to film.

My story timed a little short, so the gag men added some material, such as Bugs spinning his ears and flying through the air like a helicopter, and a few other actions like that, which was off what I was attempting to do. They also added a new end gag. In the pell-mell rush to and through animation, many of the refinements in Bugs' appearance and actions were lost. But, there is one thing that all newly born cartoon stars seem to have in common, and that is a certain indefinable "magic" that endears them to the audience from the moment they first set foot on the screen. This first Bugs Bunny cartoon was a hit.

BARRIER: That was "Hare-um Scare-um."

CLAMPETT: No, my story was called "Porky's Hare Hunt," and came out a full year before "Hare-um Scare-um" did. In fact, "Scare-um" wasn't even started until "Hare Hunt" was already causing talk in the theaters.

The head of Warner Brothers' short-subject sales, Norm Moray, sent us word from the East that people were stopping on their way out of the theater to ask the manager when they could see the next rabbit cartoon. But, there wasn't any! It was then that Leon assigned Bugs to a second hare-hunt story, this time in color. For this film, a model-sheet maker was assigned to try and advance the design of the character. My first sketches were simple, but they were very close to what you saw finally in

Clampett's original clay models, from which ceramic figurines of the Warner cartoon characters were cast.

Egghead becomes Elmer Fudd: the changes made on this model sheet marked the transition.

"A Wild Hare." But, instead of progressing Bugs Bunny in the direction his development was headed, the model-sheet maker instead took him back way over into left field, changing him to a dumpy, silly-looking thing which ended up bouncing around the screen a la Daffy, singing how "looney tuney" he was. In a sped voice, yet! This was "Hare-um Scare-um." And this was the model sheet that some have mistakenly thought to be "the birth of Bugs Bunny."

BARRIER: So, that was the **second** Bugs Bunny.

CLAMPETT: Yes. So, now, about a month after "Hare-um Scare-um" was previewed at the studio, Leon assigned the other Merrie Melodies units to do the next rabbit cartoons.

Chuck was given the third hare hunt to do, which was his first. It was called "Elmer's Candid Camera," in which the rabbit was hunted with camera instead of gun. And as you pointed out, Mike, Chuck used roughly the "Hare-um Scare-um" likeness.

Tex was assigned the fourth hare-hunt cartoon, which was his first. Tex was a little scared of it, since there was some confusion as to how the rabbit should be handled. Now, after seeing

One of Clampett's favorite Bugs Bunny poses, which he drew and the studio had printed to meet the many requests for a picture of Bugs.

the Daffy-like regression of Bugs in "Scare-um," I decided to stay close to all future story-board development, and worked with Tex in order to help get Bugs back on the track to what I had envisioned in the first story sketches. This film, "A Wild Hare," was the first with the more sophisticated and underplayed treatment that I had hoped to see. And it was the first cartoon in which we used Elmer's "wabbit" voice, and Bugs Bunny's famous catch-line, "Ehhh, what's up, doc?"

"A Wild Hare" was nominated for an Oscar, and Bugs Bunny was on his way up the ladder. He made it to the top five years later, when we were voted the No. 1 short.

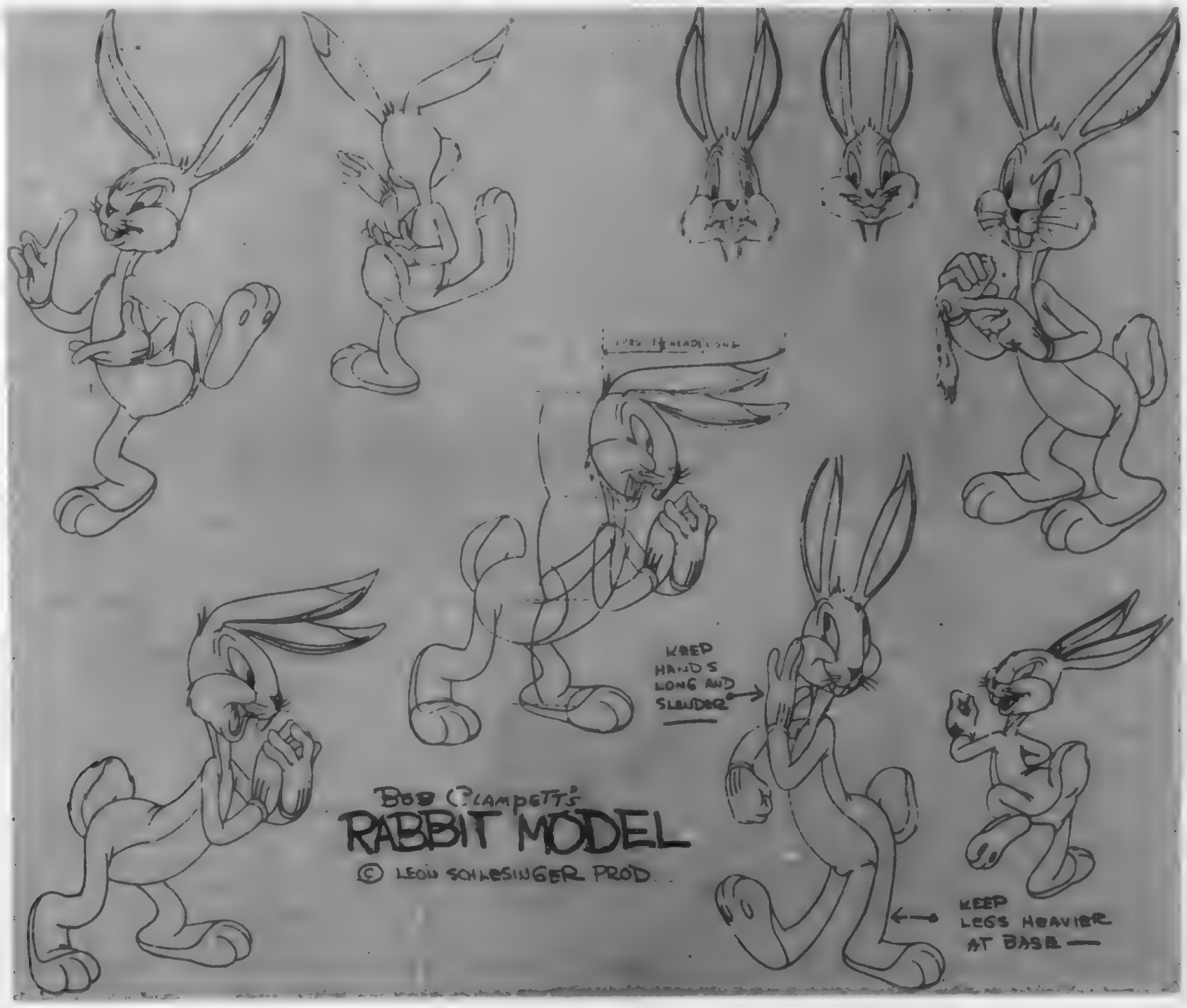
BARRIER: Was there any particular effort to keep the same character from going in divergent directions in different directors' cartoons?

CLAMPETT: Yes. For example, I talked to Tex and then went to Leon and initiated model sheets of Bugs that would really give everybody something to work from. Leon okayed my using whoever I needed to work out a final model sheet. I had excellent help from several artists but the most important role, that of finalizing these sheets, was that of Robert Givens, and resulted in the first truly definitive set of model sheets. They were printed up, and given out to the entire studio.

BARRIER: A standard line you have in your cartoons that I've often wondered about is "Agony, agony!" Is there a particular source for that?

CLAMPETT: Yes, there is. There was a little hillbilly cameraman at the

The first true Bugs Bunny model sheet, prepared by Clampett and Robert Givens.



studio named Smokey Garner. He was from the Ozarks, and a real nice little guy who had first worked for Leon at Pacific Art and Title. He was the one who shot, developed and projected our pencil tests for us.

GRAY: Oh, that's why there's a Smokey mentioned in your Bugs Bunny cartoon "What's Cookin', Doc?", where Bugs says, "Okay, Smokey, roll 'em."

CLAMPETT: That's the Smokey. I'd tell him I've got to see that test by three o'clock today, and he'd say, "Oh, agony, agony, agony!"

BARRIER: What is that award on your wall?

CLAMPETT: That's the Grand Shorts Award that I won for the "Lone Stranger and Porky," which was voted the best cartoon in its category for the year 1939. Popeye won second place, but I also won third prize for another Porky cartoon, "Injun Trouble."

That same year I made "Porky in Wackyland," which the critic on the L.A. HERALD called "a masterpiece of preposterous fantasy." I designed the backgrounds in the manner of surrealistic, Picasso-like modern art, and it got all sorts of critical attention. This was the first of its kind. What we were trying to do, UPA did beautifully after us. Leon would walk into the projection room when I was running the dailies, and he'd say, "Egad! Clampett's wet dream!"

These black-and-white Porkys were very popular, and it's interesting to note that I only had about three thousand dollars and three weeks to make each short.

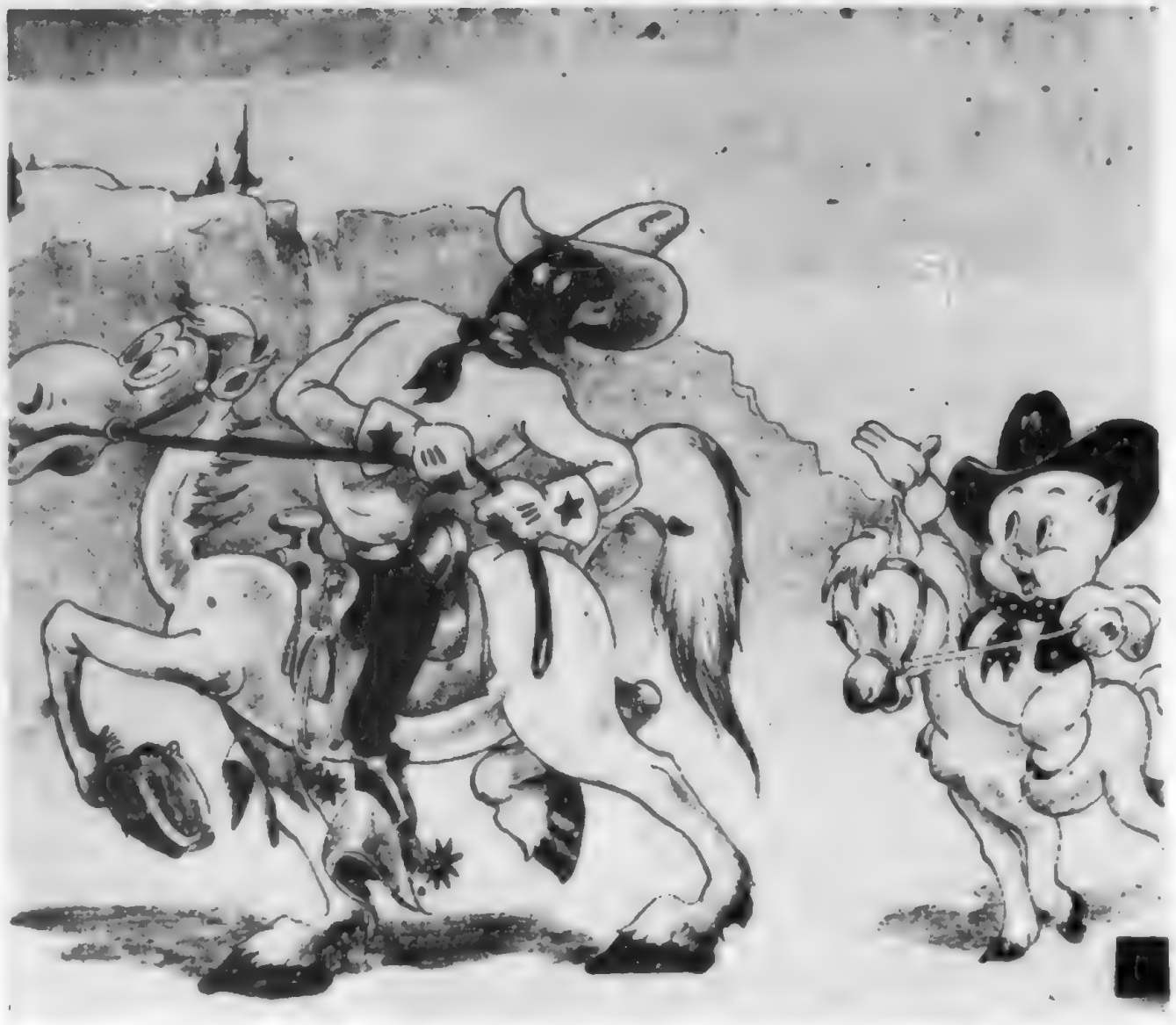
GRAY: It's amazing those cartoons came out as well as they did.

CLAMPETT: Ray Katz used to tell us, "We don't want quality, and we don't want it in the worst way." We were always trying to do something really good, but we were having to do it on a nickel-and-dime basis.

BARRIER: Your budgets were smaller than those of Disney and MGM, and you didn't have a lot of time; were there frequently occasions when you wished you had more time and more money?

CLAMPETT: Was there ever a time I didn't? Even though our budgets for a color Merrie Melodie and Bugs Bunny moved up, we were competing with Disney cartoons that we understood cost something like forty thousand dollars on up to even as much as sixty thousand dollars. So the only way we could top them was if we came up with cleverer ideas and characterizations.

GRAY: I was reading in PLAYBOY about the censorship problem that faced motion picture producers back in the Thirties and Forties and I noticed that they mentioned that the word "buzzard" was forbidden. You came up with the character Beaky Buzzard and I was wondering if you were trying to get around the censors.



"The Lone Stranger and Porky," Clampett's prize-winning cartoon.

CLAMPETT: If I had known it was censorable, I most likely would have been. I introduced my little Mortimer Snerd-like bird in "Bugs Bunny Gets the Boid" and he made a big hit. Warner's made some two-reelers with my friend Edgar Bergen, and Charlie McCarthy and Mortimer Snerd, so I ran these shorts for my animators and we had a lot of fun studying and developing the actions and personality of what I originally called "The Snerd Bird." Then I thought up the name "Beaky" for him in time for his second appearance in "The Bashful Buzzard."

But, speaking of censorship, the early Disney and Harman-Ising cartoons had, as Mike mentioned in FUNNYWORLD, a proclivity for bare-butt gags. Walt thought that these outhouse, thundermug, goosing, bare-butt and udder gags were the funniest things in the world. But when he began getting scads of letters from the Parent-Teacher Associations he suddenly went to all sweetness and light.

BEAKY BUZZARD

GRAY: I was noticing in your cartoon "Baby Bottleneck," which is one of my favorite cartoons, that toward the end of that cartoon you have a sequence where Porky and Daffy get tied together in a diaper and are carried to a mother gorilla in Africa. When Daffy sees her he starts crying. So the mother gorilla pulls the pin on Daffy's diaper, and Porky's pink, bald head sticks out and looks at her. I was wondering if it was what I thought it was intended to be.

CLAMPETT: I always did what I thought was funny, and when I had Porky's head come out of the diaper, I'm sure I thought it was funny.

GRAY: I thought it was funny, but I was wondering how it ever got past the censors.

SODY CLAMPETT: I think the censorship that had to be put up with in the ABC cartoon series was ridiculous. Bob would put things in especially for them to cut out.

CLAMPETT: If I wanted to be sure that certain things were left in, I'd put in a few extra "goodies" just for the censors. They'd cut those, and leave in the ones I wanted.

BARRIER: I recall one especially, in a Beany and Cecil cartoon, when Cecil refers to a "robin redvest" and then says, "I'm too young to say

'chest'." It was easy to tell what had been in there originally and had been cut out.

CLAMPETT: Surprisingly, Mike, that's the way I originally wrote the line—as if it had **already** been censored. And, you know, on my live puppet show, I'd have Cecil, about to sing a song, say, "Music my-ass-tro, please," night after night, and nobody objected.

In the Forties, I made a cartoon with Mr. Meek called "The Wise Quacking Duck," in which I had Daffy do a strip-tease. Daffy unbuttoned his feathers in the back, let them fall down, revealing his bare shoulders, then dropped them completely and did a fan-dance with the parsley. The audience just roared, but, of course, this was in the period of the war, and during the war there was a permissiveness in the theater very much like what we are getting now. The boys were all in uniform and they wanted this kind of gag. And that's why there were all those "wolf" gags—a wolf howling at a babe. And they particularly loved Bugs Bunny for his lack of inhibitions. What everyone else would have liked to do, he did.

Two original cels and a background drawing from "The Wise Quacking Duck," showing Daffy doing his fan dance, and Mr. Meek with his shotgun.

BARRIER: Going back through my notes, I was struck by the extremes of my feelings toward your cartoons. Most I love, but a very few—"Hare Ribbin," "Buckaroo Bugs"—I really can't stand, principally because Bugs Bunny is so very aggressive in them. I don't think I react so strongly to any other director's cartoons, except possibly to Tex Avery's, and to some of Chuck's.

CLAMPETT: Well, the two cartoons you mention, Mike, were made at the peak of World War II. Bugs Bunny has been loved for over a quarter of a century now, but he has never been loved the way he was during those war years. Just as America whistled the tune from Disney's "Three Little Pigs," "Who's afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?", in the dark days of the Depression . . . so, Bugs Bunny was a symbol of America's resistance to Hitler and the fascist powers. In both instances, we were in a battle for our lives, and it is most difficult now to comprehend the tremendous emotional impact Bugs Bunny exerted on the audience then. You must try to recapture the mood of a people who had seen the enemy murder millions of innocent people in gas ovens, blitzkrieg defenseless civilians, sink our fleet in a sneak attack, and threaten our very existence.

Psychologists found that the public subconsciously identified the stupid little man with the gun and his counterparts with Hitler, and strongly identified the rabbit—unarmed except for his wits and will to win—with themselves. They further advised that justification was already established and that the sooner and more often that the audience's alter-ego (Bugs) could get back at the Hitler symbol, the greater the therapy.

In fact, Mike, it was during those war years, from Pearl Harbor to January of 1945, that the Bugs Bunny cartoons, all of which were made by the other two directors and myself, passed Disney and MGM for the first time to become the No. 1 short subject. And in 1944 the studio chose my Bugs Bunny "Falling Hare" as their entry for the Oscar race.

But, of course, Mike, when the war ended, we all looked upon any overt aggressiveness in an entirely different light.

During those war years we all jumped in and made Private Snafu training films for Frank Capra's Army Signal Corps unit. Tash directed the first Snafu. And one of mine, "Booby Traps," was credited with saving thousands of lives and was given a special government citation. My Snafu was the only one to be given a two-page spread in the history of wartime documentaries and training films, MOVIE LOT TO BEACHHEAD.

I also collaborated with Hank (Dennis the Menace) Ketcham on a Navy version of Snafu called Hook, for which Arthur Lake (Bumstead of the "Blondie" series) did the lead voice for me. We also made technical training films for the government, and did a special Bugs Bunny bond-selling short for theaters, "Any Bonds Today?"

BARRIER: How long was Tash at Warner's?

CLAMPETT: Well, I used to kid Tash about his being the world's largest yo-yo. For you see, Tash's main interest was newspaper panels and live action, so Tash would come and go, come and go. He created a pantomime panel as a satire on his boss in New York—Van Beuren—called "Van Boring," which he left Warner's to do in 1934.

He was back as a unit director in 1936, and again in late 1943. I noticed that Tash used his cartoons to experiment with live-action camera angles such as up-shots, down-shots, angle shots, etc. And, of course, Tash eventually became a very big movie director, co-authoring and directing Jerry Lewis, Jayne Mansfield and Doris Day feature comedies.

Tash and I played tennis on weekends. He told me that he had always dreamed of coming to Hollywood with its sunshine, palm trees and bathing beauties. So, when he stepped off the train at the L.A. depot he was dressed in a white Palm Beach suit, straw hat, two-toned shoes . . . and it was pouring down rain.

BARRIER: How many Bugs Bunnys did Avery direct before leaving for MGM?

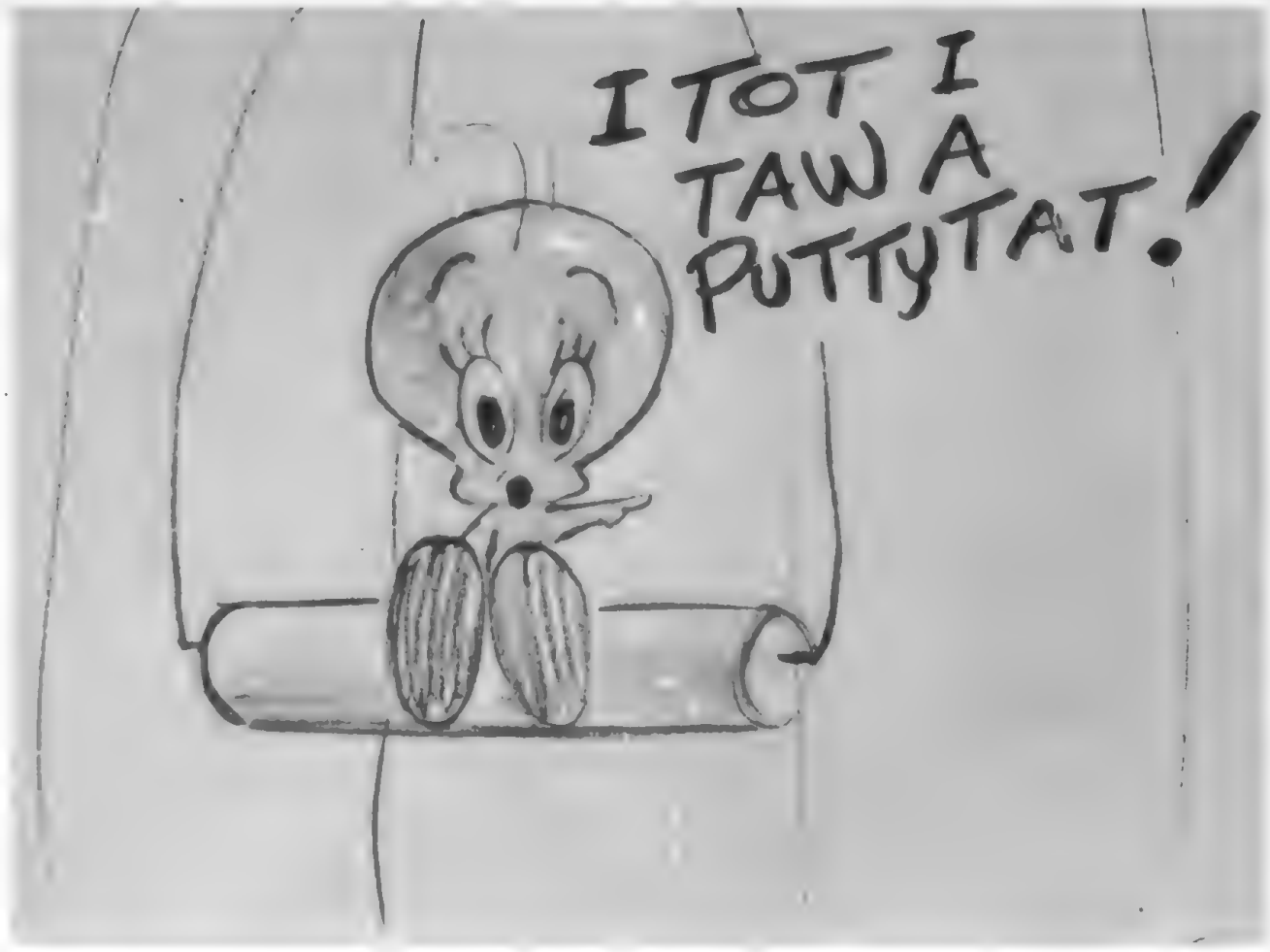
CLAMPETT: Four.

BARRIER: I've always thought that Avery's MGM cartoons were extensions of his Warner cartoons; he had a little more money so he could try more things.

CLAMPETT: Yes, definitely. Hugh and Rudy told me just the other day that when they left Leon and got an MGM contract the money per cartoon almost doubled.

BARRIER: What has Tex Avery been doing recently?

CLAMPETT: After he made all those wonderfully cartoony cartoons for MGM, Tex joined Walter Lantz, where he made the Chilly Willy cartoons.



A story sketch of Tweety.

Then he opened his own company, which makes TV commercials. He does many of his animations in association with Roy Seawright's company, Cascade. Sody and I visited Tex there recently.

Some of Tex's commercials, like the "Raid" bugs, are quite funny, and remind you in spots of his work at Warner's. You know, Tex was the first one to come out with the gag of a man's shadow on the screen. At first the audience thought it was somebody in the theater who was blocking the view, but actually, it's in the cartoon. We Rotoscoped Tedd Pierce doing that. Tex also made those travelogue satires. I helped him on the story of the first one, "The Isle of Pingo Pongo," but I take no credit for it.

GRAY: Did a story man have a lot of time to do other things, to read magazines and books and develop his storehouse of ideas . . . is that the way they worked?

CLAMPETT: . . t really. Our gag men never really had a lot of extra time on their hands. As to how they worked, that greatly depended on which director they worked for. Under Leon's system, each team of gag men worked closely with their director . . . were part of his unit. And directors went about their stories differently. Tex usually originated his own story angle and then was "lead dog" in his gag men's hunt for ideas.

Friz, on the other hand, expected his gag men to fill the boards with ideas. Friz would walk in, look over the story boards, chew his gum, and walk out. He wouldn't say what he liked and didn't like. The gag man would then frantically fill another board, and Friz would repeat the process. Then, after the gag man, like a hen, had laid all the golden eggs he could . . . Friz would make a beautiful omelet of them.

GRAY: Did you work more like Tex or like Friz?

CLAMPETT: Tex. After I had decided what my story was, I used to conduct what I called a "NO-NO" session. I would encourage each of us to think up the wildest, most impossible ideas imaginable, and no matter how wild the gags got, NO, but NO one was allowed to say, "Oh, NO!" Thus the name, a "NO-NO."

I've had the pleasure of gagging cartoons with such great guys as Warren Foster, Tedd Pierce, Mike Maltese, Tubby Millar, Rich Hogan, Cal Howard, Dave Monahan and Flash Gee. And many, many others.

GRAY: You created Tweety, didn't you?

CLAMPETT: Yes.

GRAY: What was the name of the first Tweety cartoon?

CLAMPETT: My first Tweety was called "The Tale of Two Kitties." And then, I was the the only one to make the Tweetys until such time as I left Warner Brothers.

GRAY: Your first Tweety was a take-off on Abbott and Costello, wasn't it?

CLAMPETT: Right. I started out to do a thing about the then tremendously popular comedians, Abbott and Costello, as pussycats named "Babbitt and Cats-tello." I introduced my little bird in the nest as the foil for the pussycats. But when I had Tweety say, "I tot I taw a putty-tat! I did, I did, I taw a putty-tat!", he stole the picture from the pussycats.

That was my first Tweety, and then in the second one, "Birdy and the Beast," I teamed Tweety with one black putty-tat, which was the first step towards the final putty-tat, Sylvester.

All the time I was growing up, my mother insisted upon keeping out a baby picture of me . . . in the nude. I detested that picture all my life. So, when I was making the first sketches of Tweety in his nest, completely naked, I was actually satirizing my own baby picture.

GRAY: What made you think of the name "Tweety"?

CLAMPETT: I have some idea sketches that I drew, before Tweety's birth, of two little newly hatched baby birds. As a take-off on the Halloween phrase, "Trick or treat," I named them Twick 'n' Tweet.

GRAY: Where do you get your ideas for characters and stories?

CLAMPETT: Much of the time from that "wee small voice" in my cranium . . . that whispers endless ideas to me, the source of which I usually haven't the foggiest. I find that I am continually thinking of little individual ideas, like a piece of distinctive business, a prop, or a unique characteristic . . . or a funny name . . . a type of character I'd like to try . . . a catch line . . . or a funny pose, facial expression or attitude . . . and these many thoughts, like individual pieces of a jigsaw puzzle will remain with me, sometimes for years . . . and then, in one magical moment a number of these little individual pieces will suddenly fall into place, forming a new character concept . . . or story idea.

And I get much inspiration from working with my gag men, or from reading the classics or the headlines, and from things I've observed in daily life, the theater or motion pictures. And I can usually trace **these** ideas back to their source.

For example, I loved Frank Capra's hit comedy "It Happened One Night" and went to see it a number of times. The two most talked-about scenes in this picture were the "fall of the walls of Jericho" in the motel, and the sequence where Clark Gable tried to show Claudette Colbert the techniques of thumbing a ride from passing cars, all of which whizzed past him. Finally, she stepped forward, lifted her skirt, and a car immediately screeched to a stop. That's the way everybody has always described the scene for years now.

But, as I looked at this sequence, the thing that stuck in my memory was that all the time Clark Gable was talking, he was at the same time chewing on a carrot. As I looked at him, I didn't see Gable . . . all I saw was a big rabbit chewing on a carrot.

Several years later, while sketching the first hare hunt story, this idea came back to me and I gave Bugs Bunny his first carrot in one of the dialogue scenes.

But the carrot was left out of the fin-

ished picture because the powers that be thought that it would be too complicated and time consuming for the editor to have to cut carrot sound effects in between the words in the dialogue. I explained that I'd figured it could be done easily by just recording the carrot chews right along with the dialogue . . . the way Gable had done it. They hadn't thought of doing it that way.

I worked the carrot back in, in the next Bugs Bunny story I worked on. We experimented with the biting and chewing of apples, celery and other items, but nothing sounded quite like a carrot, except a carrot. Mel's voice was usually choked up in the first part of the day, so we always tried to schedule his voice recordings in the afternoon. And the thing that choked Mel up more than anything else was when he had to chew on a carrot. You might say that the voice of Bugs Bunny was allergic to carrots!

GRAY: How did Sylvester's voice come about?

CLAMPETT: When I was directing the Porky and Daffy cartoons, Daffy's voice didn't sound much like a duck. So, I asked Mel if he couldn't add a little something extra . . . similar to, but different from, the effect Clarence Nash achieved when doing the Donald Duck voice, by forming an air pocket in his cheek and then forcing it out the corner of his mouth as he spoke. So, Mel gave me a "s-s-spit" out the side of his mouth —which he felt was the way the voice would sound sliding out the long beak —and when sped it sounded more duck-like. I always thought that this "sibilant" voice sounded much funnier before we sped it up for Daffy. This was our first use of what later became famous unsped as the Sylvester "Sufferin' succotash!" voice.

GRAY: Didn't you write some of the music for your cartoons?

CLAMPETT: While at Warner's, I wrote the lyrics for such immortal and world-famous compositions as the first "I Tot I Taw a Putty-tat," "For, There's Food Around the Corner," sung by my flea character in "An Itch in Time," and Beaky's song, sung to the tune of (get this, Mike) "The Arkansas Traveler." This was the scene in "The Bashful Buzzard" where Mama Buzzard sent her four babies out with the instruction to each to bring back some meat for the pot. The three little cocky buzzards fly home with such things as a horse, a cow and an elephant. I then cut to Beaky flying in slow motion and clutching a comparatively infinitesimal bumblebee in his claws as he sang, "I—got—my . . . self—a bay . . . bee —BUM . . . ble—beee!" (John Culhane of NEWSWEEK reminded me of this, one of his favorite scenes, just the other day.)

GRAY: Did you also write music for your own productions?

CLAMPETT: Yes, I've written over a thousand songs which were used on my "Time for Beany" and other puppet and network cartoon shows, and Sody and I collaborated on the Beany and Cecil theme song. I'm a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, and also have a music publishing company.

BARRIER: What's the story behind this Easter greeting from Bugs Bunny?

CLAMPETT: Once that Bugs Bunny started to become tremendously popular, Leon got numerous requests from various groups asking for an appearance of Bugs Bunny, or the cartoonist who had conceived and first drawn the character.

So, Leon sent me on all sorts of P.A.'s (personal appearances) for the studio to schools, universities, churches, cham-

The Easter greeting that Clampett autographed at the annual Bugs Bunny Easter show at a Los Angeles department store.

ber of commerce luncheons, and what have you. And they sent me to do a big annual Bugs Bunny Easter show at one of L.A.'s leading department stores. They would advertise the event, and there would be crowds lined up completely around the block. I did these shows on the stage of their auditorium, and I would do things like drawing two huge sketches of Bugs Bunny on an easel (one with his mouth open, and one with it closed) which I would then flip as I did the Bugs Bunny voice, giving the illusion that the drawings were talking. They loved that stunt. Then, I would have youngsters come up on the stage with me, and I'd hand out chalk and carrots to them, and award prizes to the ones who did the best drawings and impersonations of our "wabbit." We also ran a number of Bugs Bunny cartoons, after which I autographed and handed out hundreds upon hundreds of these Easter greetings from Bugs.

The winners of the contest would get a free trip through the Schlesinger studio. And every time I took a group of these winners through, showing them every single step of how we brought him to life, they'd always end up asking me, "Yes, but when do we get to meet Bugs Bunny?"

These kids actually believed Bugs Bunny was an honest-to-goodness, living, breathing creature. And, you know, sometimes I began to, too.

GRAY: Tell Mike what you told me up in Montreal, how you would overhear people on the beach talking about your cartoons the way they talk about hit records today.

CLAMPETT: That's true. I would overhear the UCLA college kids on the beach at Santa Monica bring up my latest cartoon. They would discuss it, analyze, dissect and usually praise it, as they now do a hit comedy record. It was wonderful. In the theaters they clapped for all cartoons, but when our "WB" shield first zoomed up—"bbooinng" signalling the start of one of our cartoons—they would really tear the house down.

Just to show you how well our characters were known, I have letters which I received through the mail that had nothing on the envelope but "Master Bugs Bunny, care of Bob Clampett," with no address, or just "Bob 'I tot I taw a titty' Clampett, Hollywood" on them. Now, let somebody send a letter to the "Fearsome Foursome" or whatever it is they're making for Saturday-morning TV, and see how fast it gets to the right studio.

GRAY: There's a Warner cartoon that I've seen, and I've never been able to find out the title or who directed it. It's about a cat who goes to a night club, and on the way to the night club he passes a Salvation Army group. Did you do that cartoon?

CLAMPETT: Yes.

GRAY: What was the title?

CLAMPETT: "Tin Pan Alley Cats."

SODY CLAMPETT: Isn't that the one they buried in Washington?

CLAMPETT: Yes, but not for the reason you'd think. The Library of Congress chose this film as a "prime example of the music and mores of our times" and buried a print of it in a time capsule so future generations might see it. The highlight of my film was an imaginative "trip" motivated by a jam session. So, I brought in an all-black band for the recording, and I had a heck of a time putting that through. They said, "No, you've got to use the regular Warner orchestra"—you know, all the little men with the violins. I said, "No, they can't do **this** score." My friend Eddie Beal and his band recorded the score completely ad lib.

BARRIER: I've heard you had ways of foiling efficiency experts, such as some system of warning lights so that the animators would all be busy when the boss came by.

CLAMPETT: We had an electrical hookup like that my first year at the studio. When Ray Katz walked into Tom McKimson's room, Tom would press a button which flashed a red light on my desk in the next office. And I was known as one of the "fastest draws in the West" for my split-second switch from caricatures of the boss to drawings of Bosko.

Three quarters of the fun at a cartoon studio wasn't on the screen. When I first started there, at Harman-Ising, the staff consisted primarily of boys who'd worked with Walt, Ub, Hugh and Rudy back in Kansas City. We'd all go to the corner drug store for lunch, and would occupy almost all the seats along the soda fountain counter. There might be a little old lady or man who wasn't with us, and they, of course, wouldn't know that we were all together. Now, each of our fellows had mastered the ability to burp at will. So, starting at one end of the counter they would begin a rhythmic "Burp . . . burp . . . BURP" down to the other end and back again, like a wave washing onto the shore and receding. The effect was beyond description, and you should have seen the expression on the face of the little old lady.

Several years later, when Chuck and I were animating in a room filled with other animators, we sold Leon on the idea that we would be able to turn out more footage if he would let us move into a private office of our own on the second floor of the studio, which just happened to look right into the Gold Digger girls' dressing room. We were even given our own assistant, a new, nice, quiet, well mannered little fellow from San Berdoo, who brought along his own pencil, eraser and coat-hanger, on which he had neatly lettered the name "Bob Cannon." He said very little but "Oh." So, I began calling him "Bob 'Oh'," which I shortly condensed to "Bobo."

Now, Chuck and I naturally had our desks by the window, and poor little Bobo was stuck back in the corner. So we'd start saying, "Hey, Bobo, look at these chorus girls . . . what beauties!" . . . "Wow! Look at that one!" Eventually, unable to stand it any longer, Bobo would come over to our window to look at one particularly pretty girl who was walking down the alley. And as he leaned forward to look, Chuck and I would immediately place our hands behind his head and hold it rigidly out the window. We would then scream out in shrill falsetto voices, "HELLO, PRETTY GIRL!!!" followed by a string of quite intimate and unprintable suggestions. The girl would usually stop, turn and look up at our window . . . but, all she could see would be this nice, quiet, well mannered and lovable little guy . . . Bobo.

The year before, Chuck and I were in a downstairs room with Nelson Demorest and Ham Hamilton, a very small man with a very big talent. Ham animated the key "personality" scenes in our cartoons, and they always received enthusiastic applause from the staff when previewed at the studio. Ham could do amazing things with his diminutive fingers. He would often catch a jar full of flies, then make dozens of tiny paper airplanes, onto each of which he would glue a fly, feet down. Occasionally visitors entering our room would, much to their amazement, see a whole fleet of paper airplanes flying overhead.

BARRIER: Do you remember any other stories from those days?

CLAMPETT: Here's another one you might get a kick out of. There was a compo-board partition between one of our story rooms and the darkroom where we projected our pencil tests. A hole had been knocked through the wall in one spot where we hung story sketches. Someone had drawn the figure of a little man around the hole on the wall so that it came in the place where his nose should have been. When Harold Soldinger would escort some important visitors through the studio, one of our guys would duck out of the story room into the darkroom . . . and put himself through the hole. No. Milt, not his finger.

And so, as the visitors were shown the story board, their eyes would pass right by this drawing of this little man with what appeared to be a large protruding "schnoz."

All this horseplay throughout the studio enabled us to keep our "funnybones" in good repair.

You speak in FUNNYWORLD, Mike, of what you call the "Golden Age" of Warner cartoons. And you might very well be right, for during this relatively short span of time from the mid Thirties to the mid Forties we created almost all of the all-time great Warner cartoon characters and distinctive story formats.

But, what was it we started to talk about, Mike?

BARRIER: The studio's "efficiency experts."

CLAMPETT: Actually, they had little "efficiency," and few "experts." But, our bosses had some very effective money-saving devices. For example, when a little in-betweener would go to Ray Katz to ask for a small raise, Ray, who was a little hard of hearing, became **very** hard of hearing.

And Leon had his own system. You could get in to see Leon almost any time to show him a new story or character idea, but you had to make an appointment with his secretary to see him about money. So, he'd be ready for you. Leon would go to bed early the night before, and when you entered his office he would be frowning, intently studying papers on his desk, instead of giving you his usual friendly welcome. He would keep you waiting for what seemed like an eternity, then suddenly look up and bark, "What do want?!?!" (as if he didn't know). He would then pace the room bellowing like a stuck bull, "THAT'S GRATITUDE FOR YOU! I GAVE YOU YOUR START . . . AND NOW YOU WANT A $2.50 RAISE!" etc.

Being unable to compete in the shouting department, I found over the years only one way to cope with this. I'd stand up, thank Leon for everything, vaguely refer to another purely imaginary offer, and then walk out the door. He would call me back in, bellow some more, and I would again bid him "adieu" and leave. I found that after "leaving for good" the third or fourth time, I usually got what I wanted.

So, as you can see, life in a cartoon studio wasn't always a laughing matter. For you not only had "efficiency experts" to contend with, but sometimes also your co-workers. When you were just one of the boys there was a great feeling of comradeship; but if you began to stick your head a little above the crowd there was usually someone waiting to chop it off.

Here is a caricature I made satirizing the annual group photo always taken of the entire studio staff at our annual Christmas party, and is a prediction of how I thought it might look in 1935. You can see that the boys from the other units, Friz, Dalton, Ham, McKimson, et al, even Johnny Burton, are smiling sweetly, and have their arms wrapped around me and the other boys in Tex's unit. But, on closer observation you discover that we have been stabbed, beheaded and hung and are simply being held upright long enough for the picture to be snapped.

Then in 1936, when I was filming the Tarzan and Mars stories on my own, and then was given direction by Leon, the knives were plentiful. Here's a drawing Chuck made of me and himself walking into the studio with our backs pressed tightly together so that we wouldn't get "stabbed in the back."

Here's a newspaper write-up about Schlesinger's from around a year earlier. It was a big laugh on me at the time. What happened was this. A movie columnist came through the studio with Leon. Later, Leon's publicity aide tipped me off that during the interview I was mentioned as the creator of Porky. So, I rushed out and bought up practically the whole newsstand when the paper came out. And I **was** mentioned . . . thusly: "Schlesinger is the Svengali to the Trilby of his most successful star, Porky, a pig thespian, who has the lead in the majority of releases. Porky just

came along, a master stroke of one of the artists."

Just to the left of this paragraph was the headline of a bordering article: "DO YOU STAND OUT IN A CROWD?" From which I drew an arrow to the mention of "me."

GRAY: Porky at one time was quite fat, drawn almost round, wasn't he?

CLAMPETT: As I mentioned a little earlier, Porky Pig began his career as the little fat boy of our animal Our Gang. But, when I began directing Porky I put him on a weight-watcher's diet, and you can see that a much "cuter" Porky Pig resulted.

BARRIER: I've seen some very poorly drawn Porkys in the posters and advertisements for Looney Tunes.

CLAMPETT: The reason for that is that when Warner's required the studio to make new drawings for their use in advertising, we couldn't spare any of our best Porky artists, so they usually assigned these drawings to our poorest Porky people. And then, when the poster artists at Warner's New York office got through with them, any resemblance was purely coincidental.

Another thing that has confused many is the way Leon credited his artists. If an animation buff attempts to follow the work of one of his favorite animators by the screen credits on the earlier Warner cartoons, he'll end up talking to himself. For Leon used a system of "rotating credits." A top animator might do his most outstanding work in one film, but this animation screen credit will be given to a beginning animator. Then in a subsequent film containing little or none of the top animator's work, he will receive the sole animation credit.

The same was true for the gag men. Even if a gag man had one or no gags used in a certain cartoon, if it was his turn for screen credit, the title would say "STORY by JOE BLOW."

And a director who might have originated the story angle, half the gags, done a voice on the sound track, drawn the original model sheets, and a multitude of other creative things would be given "supervision" credit, which could have meant anything.

But, I will say this for Leon, when he finally found a director he had confidence in, he let him alone. Leon gave us directors almost complete freedom within a set budget and schedule. Short deadlines, short money, but he let us make the pictures without interference. And he let us try new ideas. At Disney's the directors didn't make the pictures, we were told, Disney did. But under Leon's system, we directors were the "Disneys." Correction; the "poor man's Disney." Leon wouldn't even look at our story boards, usually, until we projected our silent cutting print of the finished cartoon for him. (I'd always do the voices and sound effects vocally during those runnings of my cartoons.) So, once Leon found the directors he had confidence in, he began going to the races more often.

A 1936 drawing by Chuck Jones, showing him and Bob Clampett walking into the Schlesinger studio with their backs together to protect them from being "stabbed in the back."

BARRIER: How did you feel about the way Disney operated?

CLAMPETT: Well, I hand it to Walt and Roy for the way they went and secured the money so that their artists had time to make quality cartoons. The other cartoon producers either weren't inclined or able to do that. Walt told me "Money is like manure . . . you use it to make things grow." And, of course, Walt had a great story mind.

I happened to remark to Walt once that when I first went to work at Harman-Ising, almost all his old friends

One of Clampett's later development sketches of Porky.

tried to sell me the idea that someone else, not he, had created Mickey Mouse. Walt sat down and gave me an hour-long history of every little detail of how Mickey Mouse came into being, how he made his earliest cartoon, etc. I wish I had had a tape recorder going that day.

GRAY: Did Disney's films ever inspire any of your stories or characters?

CLAMPETT: Disney films always gave us much inspiration, in all phases of cartoon making. I particularly was taken with their personality animation, like Art Babbitt's inebriated-mouse sequence in "The Country Cousin." Chuck and I went to the premiere of Walt's "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" at the Carthay Circle Theater in December of 1937, and were both excited about the many advances in technique. I was particularly fascinated with Disney's use of "descriptive names" for the Dwarfs . . . Grumpy, Happy, Dopey, Sneezy, etc. So I began toying with my own set of descriptive name possibilities, and hit upon the name "Sniffles." I sketched him as a little mouse with a "code id da dose" wearing a muffler and earmuffs. My figure was inspired in part by the tipsy mouse of "Country Cousin," and also by a winsome little boy in oversized clothing from the "Joe Palooka" comic strip.

Shortly after this, Friz left Warner's to go to MGM. His quota of cartoons was partially filled by Cal Howard and Cal Dalton, and then I heard from the grapevine that Leon was looking for another director. So Tex and I went to bat for Chuck, and he got the job.

There were several new characters and story ideas of mine that Chuck had

expressed his liking for, so, as a "going-away present," I gave him whatever drawings I had on them. One of these was "Sniffles." And he made a wonderfully cute series of films starring him.

GRAY: Just how long was Friz gone from Warner's—at MGM?

CLAMPETT: It seems to me that it was around a couple of years.

GRAY: You haven't mentioned Friz directing any of the first so many Bugs Bunny cartoons.

CLAMPETT: As I recall, Friz was away during the period we made the first three or more Bugs Bunnys, but he returned and was assigned direction on the seventh Bugs Bunny made, which was his first. That was "Hiawatha's Rabbit Hunt," an excellent cartoon.

BARRIER: How long was it after "Porky's Hare Hunt" that this seventh one, "Hiawatha's Rabbit Hunt," was done?

CLAMPETT: Nearly three years.

BARRIER: What did you do after the completion of "A Wild Hare"?

CLAMPETT: I worked on Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd model sheets and several new story boards, and Leon asked me to design an Oscar-like statuette of Elmer Fudd. So, I did this first "Elmer Award," given for noteworthy achievement in Cinema in 1940 by MOVIE-RADIO GUIDE magazine to Fredric March and Ingrid Bergman. They were photographed holding "Elmer" on the cover of the magazine. Don't think that wasn't a thrill. And Leon even gave me a credit in the magazine.

This was about the same time that my figurines of all the Bugs Bunny cast of characters, which you see here, were begun. And at the same time, I was making Porkys, Daffys, etc. Then Tex took MGM's lucrative offer, and I was moved up into his spot.

In 1941, I finished up "The Cagey Canary," featuring a canary, a cat and their mistress, a plot I later reprised for Tweety.

I also made the first Bugs Bunny cartoon with "wabbit" in the title—"Wabbit Twouble." It's funny, in 1931 I first wrote the word "wabbit" on a drawing, and now exactly ten years later I'm writing "wabbit" on a title. I think this was the one in which I also put all the credits in "wabbit" talk . . . "Wobert Cwampett," etc. This first "W" title caused a small crisis at the Technicolor lab. They thought they had lost the negative, but then found that they had been looking under "R" instead of "W."

SNIFFLES

I followed this with "The Wacky Wabbit." And I did a cartoon titled "Crazy Cruise," which featured a body of water called "Veronica Lake." I later gave prominence to that gag on Uncle Captain Huffenpuff's map on my "Time for Beany" puppet show.

And the next film I directed was what we thought to be the first theatrical color cartoon based on a Dr. Seuss book, "Horton Hatches the Egg." And I must say, Mike, I was very impressed with your perceptiveness regarding cartoons when you said in FUNNYWORLD that this cartoon was a "unhappy mixture of Seuss and standard Clampett gags."

BARRIER: I hope that wasn't what caught your eye first.

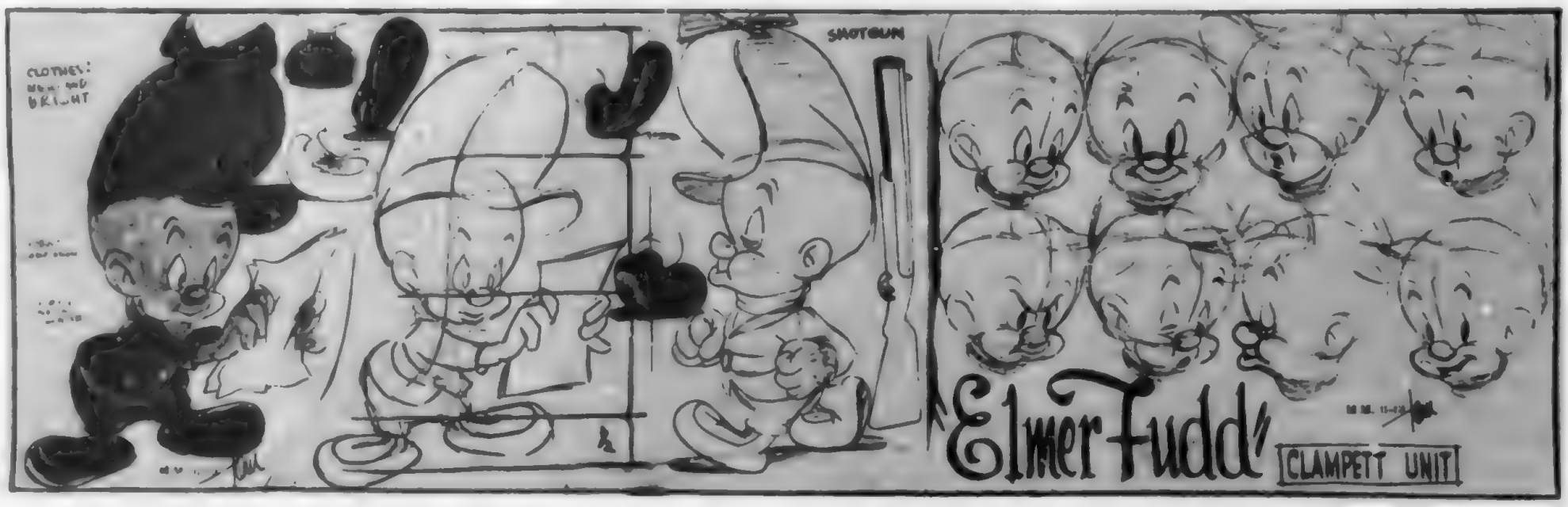
CLAMPETT: Actually, I had an awful battle getting Leon's approval to let me acquire and film such an untypical Looney Tunes-Merrie Melodies subject. Leon's argument was that if I filmed the book exactly as written, it would cause a big silent smile in the theaters, but wouldn't get any laughs. So, he gave me the go-ahead only on the condition that I would guarantee some theater laughs. By the time all the arrangements had been made, Mike Maltese and I only had about two sessions in which to gag the story. We didn't even have a story board on "Horton," but sketched the added ideas right on my copy of the book. Then, as of a Friday night I told my animators, who were all struggling to draw Bugs Bunny alike, "Guess what, boys? First thing Monday morning I want you to all draw like Dr. Seuss!"

But, surprisingly, when "Horton" played Warner Brothers' Hollywood theater the majority of the audience had never read the book . . . and roared at the Maltese-Clampett gags. And this was one of the films that the UCLA kids loved.

But I got squawks back from Warner's head of sales, Norm Moray, that in the farm country, Middle West and South they didn't know what "Horton"—an elephant sitting on a tree hatching an egg—was all about. They'd say, give us more chickens and ducks. So, at that time, there were many things that the sales people and exhibitors felt weren't widely enough understood. There was a definite demarcation between a city audience and what they called a "rube" audience. But today, with television, you can play the same thing in the small town that you do in the big city.

BARRIER: Were you in at all on the first Dr. Seuss cartoon back in the early Thirties?

CLAMPETT: I noticed in FUNNYWORLD that you asked about "'Neath the Babada Tree."



An Elmer Fudd model sheet.

GRAY: It's listed on that Family Tree of American Animation as having been made at Harman-Ising in 1931.

CLAMPETT: Well, the Family Tree of American Animation that I saw in Montreal had a number of glaring errors and omissions. And I told them so. I was at Harman-Ising in 1931 . . . and we made no such Dr. Seuss story. In fact, I mentioned this to Hugh and Rudy recently, and they had never heard of it either.

GRAY: You mentioned to me in Montreal that you didn't like your Bugs Bunny cartoon "Corny Concerto," and I've always wondered why.

CLAMPETT: It was a considerable departure, an experiment, for me to animate Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig and our other characters in synchronization to such classical compositions as "Tales of the Vienna Woods" and "The Blue Danube." Imagine mixing "Ehh, what's up, Doc?" with Strauss. But, when I first saw the rough cut run with the music track . . . I could have then made it beautiful, almost perfect, by making some minor adjustments in the timing.

GRAY: But you didn't have the money to go ahead and change it?

CLAMPETT: Oh, no, we never had.

GRAY: It was a takeoff on "Fantasia," wasn't it? With Elmer Fudd as Stokowski and Deems Taylor combined?

CLAMPETT: Yes, that's also very perceptive.

BARRIER: You did some other musicals, though, didn't you?

CLAMPETT: Yes, one I did which was tremendously successful at the time was "Russian Rhapsody" (The Gremlin from the Kremlin). This was a story of Hitler and his "New Odor" bombers leaving Nutzi-land to try to bomb the Kremlin. We did a devastating caricature of Hitler ranting and raving. Then all the little Russian gremlins took apart Hitler's plane in synchronization to stirring Russian music. It's a wonder they didn't enlarge the "Hollywood Ten" to the "Hollywood Eleven."

GRAY: I mentioned to you in Montreal how much I liked your musical "rubber band" in "Tin Pan Alley Cats."

CLAMPETT: Yes, I had this little band of rubber bands that marched through the scene carrying a sign that said "RUBBER BAND," and each individual rubber band formed the outline of a little man playing an instrument. My sped music track was wild. I still meet people who say, "Hey, didn't you have a little 'rubber band' in one of your cartoons?"

BARRIER: What other continuing Warner Brothers cartoon characters did you contribute?

CLAMPETT: There were several characters for which I came up with just the germ cell, or a character that grew into another.

BARRIER: Tell us how one of these came about.

"Horton Hatches the Egg"

CLAMPETT: The satire that I had done a couple of years earlier on "The Lone Ranger" was so well received that I decided to do a second western satire . . . this time combining the figure and voice of two famous red-heads—Red Ryder and Red Skelton's radio cowboy characterization.

So, I created a sawed-off, red-headed cowboy named Red Hot Ryder and pitted him against Bugs Bunny in "Buckaroo Bugs." I used a gag of little Red trying to stop his horse by bellowing out in a loud whiskey voice (a la Skelton), "Whoa horse! Whoa . . .Whoa when I say whoa! Oh, now, come on

A sketch for the Hitler caricature used in both "Russian Rhapsody" and Clampett's first "Hook" cartoon for the Navy.

horse . . . please whoa!" (CRASH!!!)

My little cowboy was such a big hit in the theater that Mike and Tedd came to me and got my O.K. to use him in a future story. They asked to see the cartoon again, so I had Smokey run it for us, after which we went back to my room and I got out some sketches of Red and the three of us had a discussion on how the character could be improved. Mike thought he should be made older looking, which he suggested could be done by adding larger eyebrows and a huge mustache. Tedd suggested some revisions in the costume. So I penciled in the mustache, etc. and he looked much better. Mike then wrote a story board for Friz, which I followed the progress of with interest, with Bugs Bunny again pitted against the little redheaded cowboy. And so, just as Egghead had become Elmer, this revised Red Hot Ryder became known worldwide by his new name—Yosemite Sam.

BARRIER: One last thing on Bugs Bunny. You mentioned that you all used a single model sheet, but was there any effort to keep Bugs' personality the same in the different directors' cartoons?

CLAMPETT: During those first eight or so years of Bugs Bunny we were busy exploring all possible personality traits —all the furtherest boundaries of Bugs Bunny's possibilities. And we originated and developed a number of divergent formats, each of which was tremendously successful.

For one of the strengths of Bugs Bunny is that, like all we humans, he has varying "moods." At one time he is at peace with the world and slow to react to an invasion of his privacy. At another time, he is in a playful and mischievous mood, full of practical jokes. At other times he is irritable, bugged by the claim that a tortoise can beat a hare, or whatever, and from there on out he is outwitted and frustrated by his tiny adversary. And there are many other fine shadings to his personality. So, to answer your question, Mike, yes, we made every effort to keep Bugs in character—to retain his true personality—but this never meant keeping him at all times exactly the "same."

GRAY: You are an animator, a puppeteer, a writer, a song writer, do voices, direct and what not. How would you describe your function in the making of your films?

CLAMPETT: Primarily as a story teller and an actor. Not an actor in the sense that I appear on the screen myself, but in the sense that I act through my characters. In finalizing my scripts, I always create my characters' complete performance—each movement, facial expression, voice inflection, and nuance; you know, each gesture of the hand, a lift of the eyebrow, everything.

If I'm doing Porky Pig I don't stand off removed from Porky directing him; I get inside of Porky and I think like Porky, I talk like Porky, I have a s-s-sp-speech p-p-p-problem. I walk like Porky, and I feel like Porky. I, too, was short and chubby as a child, and I know exactly how Porky feels. I am helpful, trusting, concerned, kindly and sometimes a trifle p-p-p-ut out. S-s-s-shucks, I **am** Porky.

GRAY: And when you do Bugs Bunny?

CLAMPETT: Bugs' personality is quite the opposite of Porky's. And much more fun to do. When I do Bugs Bunny I get inside of **him,** and I not only think like, feel like, walk and talk like Bugs but, confidentially, Doc, I **AM** THE WABBIT! Some people call me cocky and brash, but actually I'm just self assured. I'm nonchalant, imperturbable, contemplative. I play it cool, but I can get hot under the collar. And above all I'm a very "aware" character. I'm well aware that I am appearing in an animated cartoon. If you think I'm kidding, obsoive all my asides to the audience . . . "Funny situation, ain't it?" or "I do dis kinda stuff to him all through the picture" or, in the middle of of my fake dying scenes, "Hey! Dis oughta win me the Academy Award."

And when Elmer Fudd comes sneaking up to my wabbit hole for the umpteenth time **dressed as a hunter, carrying a hunting rifle** and I ask him, "Ehhh, what's up, Doc?" does anyone in the audience for one teensy weensy moment think that I don't know the answer to **that** question??? I'm usually just toying with him. And I sometimes chomp on my carrot for the same reason that a stand-up comic chomps on his cigar—it saves me from rushing from the last joke to the next one too fast. And I sometimes don't act—I react. And, I always treat the contest with my pursuers purely as "fun and games." When momentarily I appear to be cornered or in dire danger and I scream, don't be consoined—it's actually a big put-on. Let's face it, Doc, I've read the script and I already know how it all comes out.

Of course, Mike, Bugs Bunny is much too complex a personality for us to fully explore his "psyche" in these few minutes.

GRAY: Your cartoons had a certain look about them that no other director's cartoons have ever had. How much did you control your cartoons?

CLAMPETT: Under the Warner system I had nearly complete creative control over my own films, within severe money and time limitations. I conceived and then transmitted my characters' complete performance on to the final film through my voice people and animators. I had my own very workable ways of doing this, and I successfully carried a similar approach over into my puppet shows.

GRAY: I noticed that the animation in your cartoons was more cartoony, more exaggerated than the animation in the other directors' cartoons, and I was wondering how you got that kind of performance out of your animators.

CLAMPETT: Well, a good animator —and I had very good animators at Warner's—always tried to do each scene exactly in the manner that I had originally conceived it. I not only acted out my characters' performance for them, but also gave them layout sketches of each key pose and expression, and I made rapid sketches for them of important exaggerations in the action, squashes, stretches, etc. I even had a fresh supply of carrots daily which I used when acting out Bugs Bunny, all of which they cleverly captured with their pencils.

Some of the fine artists who have ani-

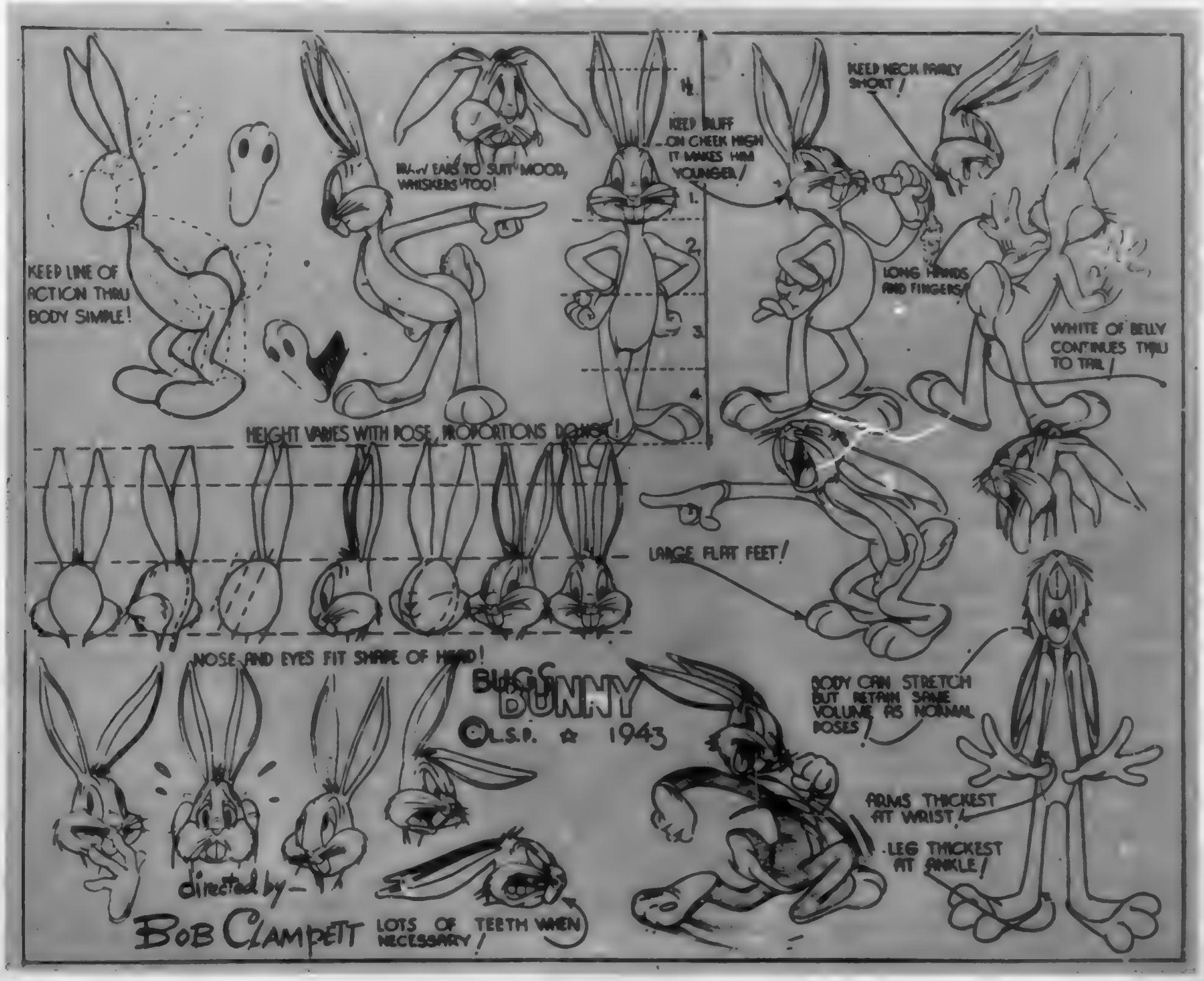
A Yosemite Sam story sketch.

mated for me are Lou Appet, Bobo Cannon, Jack Carey, Artie Davis, Izzy Ellis, Lucifer Guarnier, Manny Gould, Chuck Jones, Norm McCabe, Bob and Tom McKimson, Bill Melendez, Phil Monroe, Vive Risto, Virgil Ross, Rod Scribner, Sid Sutherland, and even, for a short time, Art Babbitt and Shamus Culhane. And Cal Dalton, a wonderful fellow and a fine animator. When a few of us met in out-of-the-way places to form the Screen Cartoonists Guild, most of the smoke in our smoke-filled rooms was furnished courtesy of Cal Dalton's cigar.

Over a period of several years my artists and I had developed what I felt were improvements and refinements in Bugs Bunny's design. But we still had the original model sheets above our desks. So, an excellent updated model sheet, incorporating all our latest thinking, was finalized by my top animator, Robert McKimson. Here's a copy of that sheet. So, as you can see, we refined Bugs Bunny step by step, like going up a ladder, except for that one cockeyed one for the second Bugs cartoon that went way over into left field.

The Bob Clampett "Bugs Bunny" unit, in a photo taken late in 1942 or early in 1943. Standing, left to right: Phil Monroe, Tubby Millar, Frank Powers, Virgil Ross, Tom McKimson, Warren Foster, Bill Melendez, Bob Clampett (with Bugs Bunny), unidentified, Lou Lilly, Warren Batchelder, Bob North and I. Ellis. Stooped (in front of Batchelder and North): Michael Sasanoff. Kneeling in foreground: Harry Barton, Don Christensen, Cornett Wood, Rod Scribner, Earl Klein, Bob McKimson.

The 1943 Bugs Bunny model sheet, by Bob McKimson.


KEEP LINE OF ACTION THRU BODY SIMPLE!
BLOW EARS TO SUIT MOOD, WHISKERS TOO!
KEEP BUFF ON CHEEK HIGH IT MAKES HIM YOUNGER!
KEEP NECK FAIRLY SHORT!
LONG HANDS AND FINGERS!
WHITE OF BELLY CONTINUES THRU TO TAIL!
HEIGHT VARIES WITH POSE, PROPORTIONS DOWN!
LARGE FLAT FEET!
NOSE AND EYES FIT SHAPE OF HEAD!
BUGS BUNNY
©L.S.P. ☆ 1943
BODY CAN STRETCH BUT RETAIN SAME VOLUME AS NORMAL POSES!
ARMS THICKEST AT WRIST!
LEG THICKEST AT ANKLE!
directed by—
BOB CLAMPETT
LOTS OF TEETH WHEN NECESSARY!

GRAY: In some of your Bugs Bunny cartoons, Bugs does a spin as he comes up out of a hole. What made you think to do that?

CLAMPETT: I first used this action on my magician gopher, pre-Bugs Bunny, then later used this identical action on Bugs. Several of the actions and personality touches that I first sketched for the magician gopher and magician rabbit stories later became part of Bugs Bunny's repertoire.

GRAY: What about the rabbit kissing the dog?

CLAMPETT: I have the true origin sketch of that gag in my Warner cartoon collection.

BARRIER: Which characters did you particularly enjoy working with?

CLAMPETT: I always felt more akin, in natural feelings, to Bugs and Cecil the Sea Sick Sea Serpent.

BARRIER: You mentioned you already had a Cecil puppet as far back as 1935; how did Cecil come about?

CLAMPETT: I created him first as a drawing, and then made him into a hand puppet.

BARRIER: You said earlier your mother had helped you make your first Cecil puppet.

CLAMPETT: That's correct. You know, some years ago she was interviewed on tape as to her recollections regarding the birth of several of my key characters, including Cecil, and she remembered certain details I didn't, therefore, I'd like to include some of her recollections with mine.

BARRIER: Fine. Where did the idea for Cecil come from?

CLAMPETT: Well, I was always drawing comic strip serials and putting on puppet shows for my friends. Then, one summer vacation, I saw a silent movie filmed in the technique of the later "King Kong," in which huge prehistoric monsters moved around the screen in a very realistic manner. Now, I'd never seen anything like it before, and it made quite an impression on me.

The plot had to do with a bearded explorer who had a map showing where a prehistoric land was located. He and his party traveled there and eventually captured a long-necked prehistoric creature which they brought back to civilization. But it escaped, falling into the water, and as the film ended it swam out to sea, as the explorer looked forlornly after it.

My mother says "that was the end of the story for the rest of the audience, but was only the beginning for" me.

I designed a comical sea-going serpent-like character—inspired by the completely serious figure in the film—and began drawing comic strips of him swimming through the water passing boats. He would say, "Howdy!" to the passengers, and they would return his greeting, then make monumental double-takes. And so on.

And I then drew a chubby little explorer character and had him chase across the ocean in his own little boat after this long-necked character . . . whom I later named Cecil the Sea Sick Sea Serpent.

The thing that intrigued me was the fact that the huge animated figure in the film wasn't a drawing, but an actual dimensional figure. I had to know how this was done, how this monster was made to move and do all the things he did. Nobody's explanation satisfied me, and it practically became an obsession with me. I then hit on the idea of making Cecil a dimensional figure—a hand puppet.

BEANY and CECIL

To quote my mother, "I helped [Bob] cut and sew an old sock so that it fit his arm and hand, and we cut some cardboard to hold its mouth shape, and I sewed on buttons for eyes and nostrils, which he chose from my sewing basket."

I colored it with Crayolas, and later made a little boat from a cardboard box and put on puppet shows for the neighborhood children, using the front porch railing as the stage, from below which I moved the puppets.

The vines and plants became jungle. And the Cecil puppet made an immediate hit with the children as I would make him reach up and tug on the vines and chew on the leaves, and take bites out of the cardboard boat, and play pranks on the explorer, and other things of that nature.

BARRIER: Am I correct in assuming that the man in the beard and pith helmet was the direct ancestor of Captain Huffenpuff?

CLAMPETT: Yes. But I gave Uncle Captain a completely different and original personality.

"I don't recall how the voices sounded at first," my mother continued, "but when [Bob's] voice changed seemingly overnight to a deeper tone and he spoke for the Cecil puppet . . . it suddenly came to life, sounding very similar then to the way he did years later on television. And those hearing him speak laughed. And he seemed to each time become more of a personality until he became quite believable and even amusing to the adults."

You see, Mike, I crystalized Cecil's voice and personality at the very moment that I'd grown from a short, chubby youngster to a tall, skinny adolescent. I suddenly felt as if **my** neck was six feet tall . . . and when I spoke it sounded to me as if my voice was coming from somebody else. A Sea Serpent is a thing apart. And that's exactly how I felt. Clumsy, unwanted, a minority of one, but with high hopes and great surges of new-found power.

All the pains and pleasures, intense feelings and emotions of my own adolescence are ingrained in Cecil. So much of what I put into Cecil in my puppet show was deep-rooted emotions, which I am able to convey to other people. When you look at a Cecil gag you might say, "Oh, that's just funny." But there's a tear to it, too.

BARRIER: Especially Cecil's loneliness and lack of a female sea serpent.

CLAMPETT: Right. In my daily puppet show I was able to develop Cecil's personality and changing moods much more slowly, and get the feeling of loneliness and sadness. And Cecil has great changes of pace. He is very slow to catch on to how Dishonest John is conning him. He is slow to anger, but when he finally realizes that little Beany boy is in trouble and D.J.'s got him,

Filming Charlie McCarthy in animation at the Bob Clampett puppet studio, circa 1938-39.

well, ol' Cece really tears the place apart. Then you feel better about it than if he'd gone into action the very first moment. And then, I'd have that wonderful warm feeling between Beany and Cecil, ending with a "slurp kiss."

So, you see, Cecil was with me all those years, until the right time came along. Some felt he was actually my alter ego.

BARRIER: How long after this first Cecil puppet was it that you helped make the Mickey Mouse dolls for Disney?

CLAMPETT: About four years. And this proved very helpful, because I gained more experience in converting drawings into dolls and puppets. And Charlotte helped me make an improved version of the original Cecil sock puppet, as well as a paper pattern which became the guide for later versions.

BARRIER: Speaking of Disney, did you have any contact with Walt later on?

CLAMPETT: Yes, I did. I saw and talked with him quite often. I was particularly pleased when Walt complimented me on some of my Bugs Bunny cartoons which he'd seen and enjoyed. And then, after my Beany television show first caught on, Walt likened its impact and excitement to that of his first Mickey Mouse cartoons.

I was good friends with Walt's niece Margie Davis. She invited Uncle Walt and me to one of his grandnephews' birthday parties. I brought a basketful of Beany and Cecil toys and merchandise. And Walt walked in with an armful of Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck toys. It so happened that Walt's own grandnephews were such great fans of my Beany and Cecil TV show that they ran around all day wearing Beany caps, playing with Beany balloons and games, with Cecil and Dishonest John puppets on their arms, giving the D.J. laugh, "Nya ha ha!" Well, Walt's eyebrow went sky-high.

But, of course, it was no time at all until he went on the air with his "Mickey Mouse Club" and wonderful "Disneyland" TV program. And I'm sure that his grandnephews thereafter wore nothing but Mousekeeteer caps—copyright WDP.

Speaking of Disneyland, I was at Walt's house when he had the start of the park in his back yard, laid out in miniature.

BARRIER: After you went to work at Warner cartoons, did you still find time for your puppets?

CLAMPETT: Sometimes I was so busy that I didn't have much time for them, but then in the late Thirties I had a tremendous resurgence of enthusiasm, and I opened my own puppet studio across the street from Warner's Sunset Studio, where I was directing the cartoons.

It was there that I invented and patented a dimensional animation puppet process in association with one of my Porky aides, Al Kendig, a talented young sculptor who shared my enthusiasm for puppetry and dimensional animation. Buyers advised me they'd be interested in my puppet idea if I secured a well known character as the star.

We approached Edgar Bergen and proposed that we film a series starring Charlie McCarthy. So, the wheels in my puppet studio began turning on an animation of Charlie McCarthy.

Charlie became very real to me, and I'll never forget the shock I got the first time Al and I went to Bergen's home and found Charlie McCarthy sitting on a chair in the front room—beheaded. Edgar explained he always wrapped Charlie's head and put it in a drawer overnight for safekeeping.

We also filmed a reel of my own puppet characters, and I developed my friend Cliff McBride's popular newspaper comic-strip dog character Napoleon (and Uncle Elby) as a hand puppet.

Not satisfied with the immobile facial expressions of the top dummies and puppets of that day, I began work on the development of a way of giving my own puppets mobile, but **controlled**, facial expressions, such as we achieved in our cartoons by a simple stroke of our pencils. After a long period of trial and error, beginning with metal skeletal joints and mechanical controls, I finally arrived at a method of "finger-tip control" . . . **controlled** expressions.

My mother recalls visiting me at that studio and says I showed her "a third version of Cecil which" I "was able to make do facial expressions such as smiling, frowning, looking sad and quivering his lips, etc."

Due to the fact that my exclusive contract with Leon gave him ownership of everything I created, I had to negotiate a separate agreement with him which allowed me to develop my puppets, but gave him the right of "first refusal" on everything I did. So, when I finally got my puppets up to a point, I showed them to Leon and said, "Here it is, I'm ready to go." And he looked at my films and at my hand puppets and he said, "That's awfully good. That's clever. But a shoemaker sticks to his last." Which was his way of saying his factory was set up to manufacture cartoons, so why poop around with puppets.

I was bitterly disappointed at the time, but, of course, Leon's rejection of my puppets was the luckiest thing that ever happened to me. Otherwise, Warner Brothers would today own the Cecil puppet and so many other elements of my later TV shows.

Years later, when Leon was in the hospital gravely ill, he sent me word that the only bright spot in his day was at six-thirty, when it was "Time for Beany."

The Bob Clampett puppet studio, this time during the filming of Clampett characters.

GRAY: I noticed that in some of your early cartoons you used gags about hand puppets.

CLAMPETT: That's true. They say coming events cast their shadows before them. And you'll see numerous places where I first tried out a little idea which I later used full blown on my TV puppet shows, over a decade later.

BARRIER: For example?

CLAMPETT: In the late Thirties I did a cartoon about a sea captain, who when warned on the map that his boat was approaching a "sea serpent area," scoffed, "That's silly. There's no such thing as a sea serpent!" At which point a huge sea serpent appears and asks, "So what am I—a brook trout?" Then, I had him swim off, gaily singing "I'm the biggest serpent in the C. C. C."

Ten years later, I used this exact "That's silly. There's no such thing as a sea serpent!" line on my very first "Time for Beany" show, said by sea Captain Huffenpuff. Beany believed in Cecil, but Uncle Captain always just missed seeing him. So, my "no such thing" line and situation was a cornerstone plot-wise daily for the first couple of years, until I finally allowed Uncle Captain and Cecil to meet.

Mrs. Clampett and her son's Emmy.

In another cartoon about a boy and a dinosaur I first used a touch of Beany and Cecil's boy and dog-like devotion to each other, and the later famous Cecil "slurp-kiss" on the screen for the first time. And I illustrated the manner in which I later did my "Time for Beany" hand puppets in "The Hep Cat."

BARRIER: You won the Emmy for your first year of Beany on TV, didn't you?

CLAMPETT: Right. And a reference to this award concludes my mother's written recollections. She says, "When my son won the first of his three Emmys for the Beany show, I was present at the awards dinner, and he presented his Emmy to me in thanks for helping him make his first Cecil puppet . . . and I still have this award in my front room, which I enjoy viewing."

GRAY: Getting back to the Warner cartoons, there's a cartoon called "Slightly Daffy," in color, in which Daffy and Porky are at a fort that's attacked by Indians. You made a picture with that plot in black and white, and I was wondering if you had redone it in color.

CLAMPETT: Yes, and I also took one of my prize-winning black-and-whites

An original drawing from "The Hep Cat."

called "Injun Trouble," and retraced it in color. The new version was called "Wagon Heels."

BARRIER: Was there much of that, re-making black-and-white cartoons in color?

CLAMPETT: No. I think I started it with a color version of my first black-and-white Porky, retitled "Tick Tock Tuckered." The studio was looking for some cost savings, with all the war-time shortages, so I said, "Look, we've got the finished picture and sound track. It's a good story. All that has to be done is for an assistant to trace it off on the Rotoscope. That will give you a big saving in money."

BARRIER: Why did it have to be traced?

CLAMPETT: The studio, always penny wise and pound foolish, had already cut up the animation from finished cartoons into story sketch paper. It's always interesting to look on the back side of many of my early story sketches and see the animation of that period. So there were a few remakes like that, but not many.

After I had left, they took a cartoon of mine that was a beautiful cartoon in black and white—it got all sorts of crit-

Clampett (foreground) listens to Mike Maltese (facing camera) and Tedd Pierce at a story-board session at Clampett's own cartoon studio. The story board is for one of the cartoons in the Columbia series that Clampett supervised.

ical attention, and they remade that, changed it all around, and it was a complete nothing. That was astounding, because it was a remake of my hit Picasso-like short.

BARRIER: What was it like in 1944 when Warner Brothers bought out Leon Schlesinger and replaced him with Eddie Selzer?

CLAMPETT: Sort of like when Harry Truman took over after Franklin D. Roosevelt. They plugged up the holes and painted the walls, put carpets on the floors, and installed neon-tube lighting and a shiny new time clock. It was a lot like what happened at Disney's when they moved from the friendly old Hyperion studio to the new hospital-like plant in Burbank. Everything was prettied up and much more organized. But the boys could no longer throw push pins into the ceiling to see how many would stick, and there were no longer holes to put one's "schnoz" through.

And so, as I bade farewell to the "wabbit factory," the fun sank slowly, in the west.

BARRIER: How did the big bosses in TV compare to bosses at the movie studios?

CLAMPETT: Well, a fellow I've enjoyed talking to at parties—David Levy, former producer of the Jack Benny show—said, regarding the broadcasters, "The upper crust is really just a bunch of crumbs held together by dough."

Actually, Sody and I have some wonderful friends throughout the TV industry. Some of these friendships date back to the early Forties, when the Screen Cartoonists Guild chose me as its first television chairman. I looked into everything being done in those beginning day of TV for the Guild.

One of the new magazines devoted to video, **TELESCREEN**, FOR THE ARTS OF TELEVISION, did a special issue on the animated cartoon's future in TV, and there were articles and art from Disney and others. I was asked to write the Warner Brothers cartoon article, in which there's a mention of my puppet studio and TV puppet plans.

BARRIER: Just when was this?

CLAMPETT: Around a year or two before I left Warner's, and four years prior to Beany's debut. Bugs Bunny and I further explored the animator's place in TV in an article in another leading television magazine, **TV**, MAGAZINE OF VIDEO FACT.

BARRIER: You also opened a little cartoon studio for the making of TV commercials, didn't you?

CLAMPETT: Yes.

BARRIER: What did you do there?

CLAMPETT: Well, I was Mr. Clean, developing a Swan soap and Rinso-White (happy little washday song) commercial. The Lifebuoy soap people asked me to develop a character with which to present their "B.O." (body odor) radio jingle on television. So, I created "The Lonesome Lovebird," an amorous but lovelorn little guy from whom all the little girl birds ran, due to his "problem"—which was cleared up by a "Lifebuoy bird bath."

Tedd and Mike helped me on stories in their spare time, and some of the things we developed at my studio spilled over back into our Warner cartoon stories. In fact, we three gagged a couple of stories for Warner's that grew out of my "Lonesome Lovebird" character and angle, one of which featured perhaps the earliest use of a cat with the "Sylvester" likeness and personality. And the boys also picked up extra money doing Columbia cartoon stories for me, such as "Cockatoos For Two," one about a rum-barrel-carrying St. Bernard who got loaded, and one about a black cat and lots of beans which I titled "Boston Beanie."

BARRIER: Beanie? Was this before you named your puppet Beany?

CLAMPETT: Yes, over two years before. You can see from some of the names I thought up, Beans to Beaky to Beanie to Beany, that I had Beany boy's name on the tip of my tongue for some time.

GRAY: Didn't you tell me in Montreal that the censors tried to give you trouble on Tweety?

CLAMPETT: After Tweety became a big hit, the censors said, "Say—that bird looks **NAKED**!" So, I had to change Tweety from a little bare bird in a nest to a canary in a cage, modestly covered with yellow feathers.

Before I left Warner's, I had a number of stories in work, including several Tweetys. Carl Stalling came to me with an idea for a title; he asked, "How about 'Tweetie Pie'?" which I liked very much. So I started that cartoon and then I left. Mike and Tedd and Friz's unit later made "Tweetie Pie," and it won the Oscar. We'd had several Bugs Bunnys nominated, but never won. So, Tweety was Warner Brothers' first Oscar-

"Dey'll Never Get It Off De Ground"

by Bugs Bunny

Bugs Bunny and his creator, Bob Clampett of Warner Bros. Cartoon Studio, discuss some of the high-points of cartoons in television.

"Howdy folks! Dis is Bugs Bunny speakin'.

What's all dis chatter about throwin' movin' pitchers around tru de air elec-chronically?

But seriously now, folks, dis television ting — if you ask me

"Dey'll never get it offa de ground." Why — just de other day I was sittin' around, over at de Warner Bros. Cartoon Studio, gassin' about television wit me friend — Director Bob Clampett. For a coupla years he's messin' around nites wit new cartoon techniques, and 'dis here television stuff.

"Listen, B.C.," I'm sayin', "You're oofty-magoofty — or Looney-Tuney or sumpin', t' spend all dis time messin' wit a ting of de feucher. What d'ya wanna do — have a noivuss break-up, or sumpin? Why,

"Bugsy, ol' boy," sez Bob, "Dis television ting is gonna be big. Lots bigger dan you or I."

"Bobsy, ol' boy," sez I, "Dey'll never get it off de ground." Den Bob slips me de $64 question --

"And how about Macaroni and his wireless telepathy?" sez he.

"A fluke," sez I. "A Sunday punch if I ever saw one. But just supposin' dis elec-chronic business really is de McCoy," sez I. "Where do I come in? What about cartoons over television?"

"Now we're gettin' somewhere," sez Clampett. "Draw up a chair and lend me your ears. Foist off—lemme say — animated cartoons over television gives a sharpness and clarity superior to any other technique because of its line quality — and sharp, simple tone images.

And, foidermore," continues Clampett, "de cartoons' faster tempo, and direct approach — makes it able to tell a story or punch over an advertising point much more briskly dan — "

"Quick like a wabbit?" I interpolates.

"Quicker, yet. And, besides — ," continues Clampett wid'out even takin' de pause dat refreshes, "de animated cartoon is poifect for puttin' over everyt'ing from kids serials to 25 second commercials. From — "

"O.K. — O.K. — " I interrupts. "Who do ya t'ink ya are, anyhow — Dr. Tree De Forest — or sumpin? Givin' off wit' all da facts and figures — "

"No, Bugs — I'm no expert."

"O.K. — O.K. — Mr. Smarty-pants." I'm tellin' him. "So let's say dis television proves t'be de real malarky — and let's say cartoons come over like a million bucks — den comes de defoogalty!"

"What's de rub, Rabbit?" asks Robert.

"Just dis, bright-eyes. Cartoons'll not only look like a million bucks --dey're liable to *cost* a — "

"Million bucks?"

"Well, not exactly — but it won't be hay. Pen and ink monkeys don't work for peanuts anymore, y'know. And Wabbits may wove cawwots' — but when pay day rolls around — we're all just like mother and daughter."

"Y'mean, —ah - - workin' for de Yankee dollah?"

"Precisely."

"So?" asks Clampett.

"So — what bodders me is dis," sez I. "Who's gonna pay de freight on cartoons at de present price per foot?"

"A civil question," admits Clampett, "which desoives a civil answer."

"Y'see, Bugs, we, in de production end of cartoons, have realized dat television during it's formative years - - will be faced wit dis cost problem you speak of. We've given it a lotta thought and we already have a few of de answers.

"Foist off — you must remember a film made t'be shown on a gigantic theatre screen is one ting — an' one made t'be shown on even de largest television screen is anodder. In a 7 minute animated cartoon - - every pen line is a cost. Therefore - - SIMPLIFICATION is de answer.

"Say, f'r instance." continues Clampett, "Disney leaves de' buttons off of Mickey Mouses' pants — "

"Sorta risky, ain't it?" I asks.

"Can't you ever be serious, Mr. Wabbit. What I'm attempting to point out is this. On the small television screen — the absence or presence of such a small detail would never be noticed. And yet, one button, when carried through a series of thousands of consecutive drawings—can cost a pretty penny — and a few Yankee dollahs t' boot."

"Therefore, — on television — simplification of detail in both character and background is better — not only *commercially* — but *artistically*."

"I still don't think Mickey's gonna like it — goin' around wit' no buttons on — "

"Besides, Bugs," continues Clampett, "De cartoon will make its costs justifiable on de spot announcements and station breaks by virtue of dere' many repetitions. We've stumbled onto a lotta other time and cost savers — but, de real ideas'll come when de Hollywood cartoon makers really start grindin' out films for television.

Out here in de Land of Oz we have de greatest grouping of animation experts in de world today. When dese animators, writers, and technicians get dere teeth in tele-cartoons — you'll see de quick development of a sensational new style of cartoon—tailored to television. Both artistically — and monetarily."

"Bravo! Mr. Clampett," sez I.

"Thank you, Bugs," sez Bob.

"I'm glad you're beginning to see it my way."

"But, if you ask me, Bob," sez I nonchalantly takin' a bite outa my carrot. "Dey'll never get it offa de ground!! or will dey?????"

Bugs Bunny and Bob Clampett discuss animation's future in television—and make some startlingly accurate predictions.

winning character. And I'm mighty proud of my little guy.

Other stories I'd started, which were later completed by other units and directors, included the one in which I'd created my last two continuing Warner characters, those overly polite gophers, Mack 'n Tosh. And in the same film I introduced a dog who recited Shakespeare, a forerunner of my later William Shakespeare Wolf puppet characterization. "The Birth of a Notion" was also my title; plus "The Big Snooze," which was my last Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd cartoon for Warner's, and there were several other bird and cat (Sylvester) stories.

Although I was still quite young when I left Warner Brothers cartoons, I was their oldest employee. Eddie Selzer informed me that I had been with Merrie Melodies and Looney Tunes longer than anybody else in the entire studio, and that between 1936 and '46 I had been directing almost a year and a half to nearly nine years longer than the other directors.

GRAY: What was the actual reason you left Warner's?

CLAMPETT: I was so full of ideas that I wanted to try that I was practically bursting—things that I wanted to do that I couldn't do within Warner's walls.

BARRIER: Your cartoons seem a little crowded sometimes, as if you wanted to do more with the story and didn't have room for it.

CLAMPETT: Right. At Warner's I had a wealth of ideas, more than I ever had room to use. Then later, when I started my "Time for Beany" puppet show with fifteen minutes a day to fill, it was just great! Because now I had sufficient screen time to use and develop all my ideas without slashing, pruning and compressing them.

For "Beany" on TV, I wrote and filmed more footage in **one week**, than a director at Warner's turned out in **one year**.

I'd been at Warner's almost half my my life, I'd gone as high up in the studio as was possible, and had proven to myself that I could create enormously popular characters for them—so, why not for myself?

After Leon Schlesinger sold out to Warner's, his brother-in-law Ray Katz, with Leon's backing, took over the Columbia cartoon studio, Screen Gems. They came to me and said, "We want you to be the creative head of Screen Gems, at double what Warner Brothers is paying you." So, during this transitional period, at the same time that I was making my Warner cartoons, I was running my own studio, and shaping up the Columbia cartoon stories for them.

But, this was too much of a good thing. So, I decided the time had come to leave the warmth of the Warner womb. Now, I knew that it would be very difficult to get established on my own. Commercial TV was just beginning, and all

Cecil and creator among the elite on the wall of the Brown Derby restaurant.

the theatrical releases were tied up by Disney, Lantz, Terry and the major studios, so the market for my own studio's output was practically nonexistent. But, after helping Leon and Ray get squared away at Screen Gems, I left to do my own thing.

And, the decision proved right, for in a few years' time my weekly check rose from in the hundreds of dollars to into the thousands. And now my character creations remained my own property, not that of the Warners and the Harry Cohns.

And Cecil the Sea Sick Sea Serpent received the true mark of success in Hollywood . . . his caricature on the wall of the Brown Derby along with Gable, Bergen, McCarthy and Snerd, Groucho, Danny Thomas and Durante.

BARRIER: You did some of the voices or your pictures yourself, didn't you?

CLAMPETT: Before I could write the dialogue for a new character, I'd sometimes have to first invent the character's voice. Once I had the voice worked out, I preferred to then transfer it to my voice people . . . and then, I'd continue to mold and develop it. Of course, I was the voice of Cecil and some of my other puppets long before and all during my years at Warner's, and through my cartoons from time to time you'll hear one of my voices or vocal sound effects.

BARRIER: Vocal sound effects?

CLAMPETT: Yes. I do vocal impersonations of such things as a leaky faucet, a cow walking through mud, an oil can, a hen who's just laid an egg, a gong . . . in any key, and hum a tune and tap dance vocally at the same time . . . and perhaps you heard my vocal slide-whistle, "BwoooOOOooop."

BARRIER: Is that the sound effect used at the close of some of the Warner cartoons, when the iris is closing in, just before "That's all, folks"?

CLAMPETT: Right. And even after I'd left Warner's and was doing Beany, I'd catch a new Warner cartoon in which our terrific sound man Treg Brown had cut in one of my old "BwoooOOOooops."

The second half of this interview and a complete Bob Clampett filmography will appear in FUNNYWORLD No. 14.

reviews:

WHERE THE YELLOW WENT

YELLOW SUBMARINE (United Artists). Produced by Al Brodax. Directed by George Dunning. Designed by Heinz Edelmann. 87 minutes.

By Mike Barrier

The most striking thing about this highly visual film is the importance of the voices. Critics have had a good time listing Heinz Edelmann's borrowings from an incredible variety of sources (displaying their own erudition in the process, and sometimes a boundless capacity for seeing what isn't there), but the film reminded me of nothing so much as Ernest Pintoff's "The Interview" (1961) and "The Critic" (1962). In both of those very minor cartoons, funny, quirky human voices are contrasted for comic effect with the abstract (in "The Critic") or highly stylized (in "The Interview") images on the screen. The contrast between the aural and the visual is the whole point of those cartoons. In "Yellow Submarine," however, the contrast is a by-product of a philosophy of cartoonmaking that "Yellow Submarine" represents admirably. Perhaps in no other cartoon are the defects of that philosophy so well illustrated.

As in "The Critic," the voices in "Yellow Submarine" are in effect a commentary on the action, rather than the voices of the characters themselves. There's no real connection between the cardboard cutouts on the screen and the Liverpudlian accents on the soundtrack. What's happening on the screen is not animation in the classic sense—convincing movement—but design for design's sake. The stiff, artificial animation is appropriate in that it never interferes with our awareness that we're looking at brightly colored, often eccentric drawings. The visual effects are sometimes arresting —especially the illustrations for the songs, and especially for "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds"—and frequently pretty, but "Yellow Submarine" is a narcissistic peacock of a movie. There is just so much interest to be found in watching a motion picture preen itself, inviting us to admire its prettiness and its cleverness. "Yellow Submarine" is like a great many short cartoons of the last twenty-five years, differing from them principally in the quantity of its prettiness and cleverness, not in its emphasis on those qualities. Its unprecedented deluge of artistic borrowings helps conceal its artistic poverty. Lifting the styles of a host of artists and setting the drawings wiggling as the camera flashes by leaves the viewer dazzled; it's a lazy man's way to get a response. Like its predecessors, "Yellow Submarine" is not merely a peacock, it's a chicken of a movie. The Beatles' name saved it commercially, and their second-hand voices help salvage it artistically, by lending a trace of humanity to what is otherwise a wholly cold and decorative film. But even the soundtrack suffers from a split personality; there's a marked discrepancy in the quality of the sound in the dialogue and the sound in the songs, and no effort apparent to patch up the seams.

Things used to be different. The drive behind Walt Disney's early cartoons, and the cartoons of other major producers of the Thirties and early Forties, was the integration of the various elements of the cartoon. The drawing style, the animation, the music, the voices—all of these had to work together in service of the story, or even the individual gag. In contrast, the drive behind the most significant cartoons of the last twenty-five years has been the disintegration of the cartoon's elements—drawings are plainly drawings, movement is plainly artificial, the music comments on the action or even stands aloof from it, rather than underlining it, the voices are frequently twisted and strained, rather than simply exaggerated. In particular, movement—the heart of animation, and the first concern of earlier animators—has been de-emphasized, and sometimes virtually abandoned.

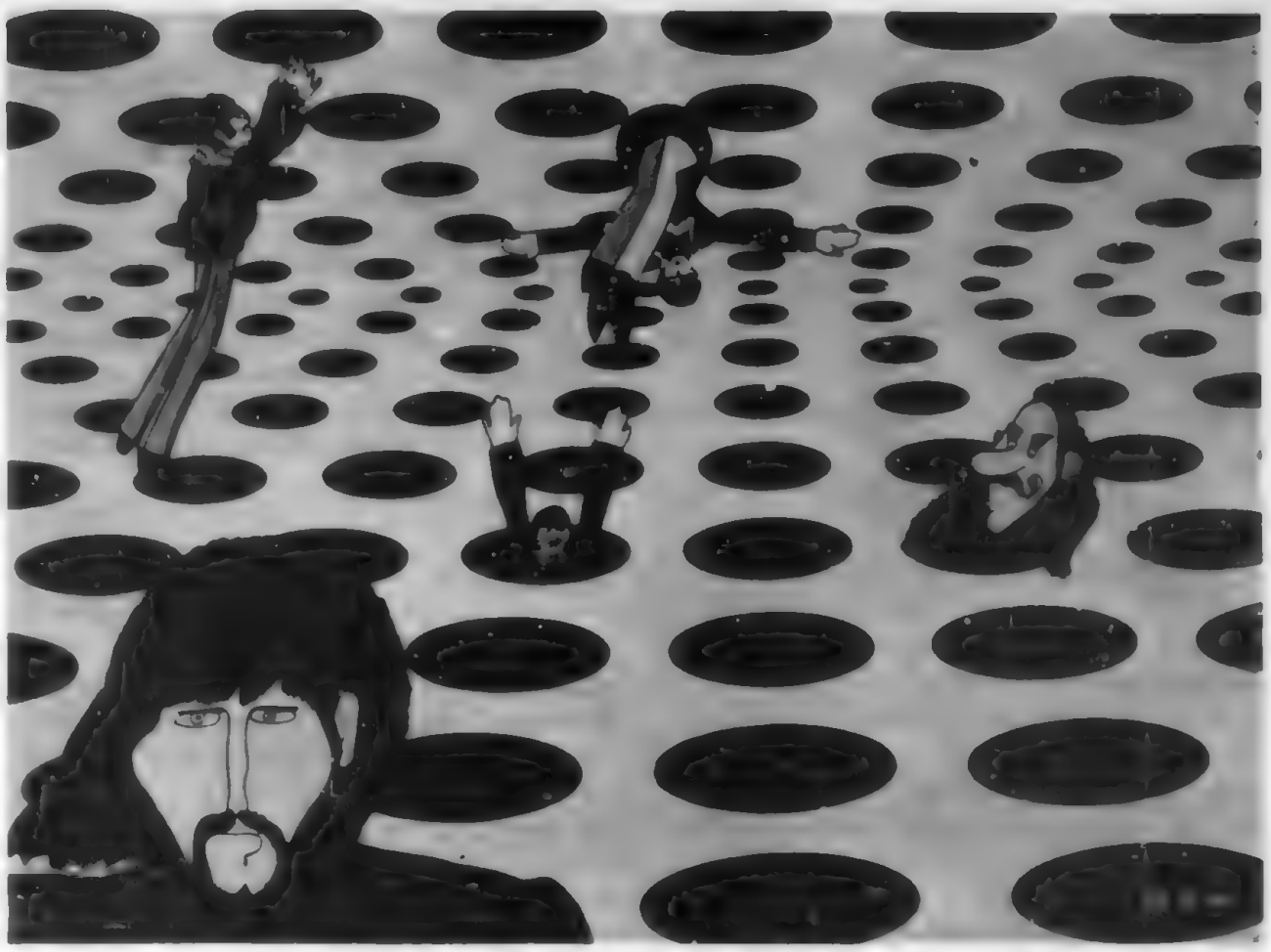
The seeds of this development were present in earlier cartoons. It's hardly necessary to point out the excesses in some of Disney's cartoons, especially the growing emphasis on producing cartoon facsimiles of human beings in motion. The animation of human figures is essentially pointless, since the live-action camera can do it better, but Disney pursued this goal relentlessly, abandoning the great animation tradition established in his own early cartoons and carried on at other studios by directors like Clampett and Jones and Avery. In their cartoons, as in Disney's best, the impossible was brought to convincing life through smooth and natural movement. However, these animators, and others, were sometimes the victims of a similar imbalance. There's a fascination with languid, detailed movement in some of the Harman and Ising cartoons for MGM, a fascination especially evident in their bears (whose slow movements didn't have to be explained). Hanna and Barbera's Tom and Jerry cartoons are over-animated (and how incredible that seems today!); there's lots of superfluous movement. Like many other MGM products of the time, they reek of money spent lavishly on "quality" (i.e., money spent so that it will show), and that, of course, is why they won so many Academy Awards. Tex Avery's MGM cartoons probably cost as much, but lack that rich look, since Avery didn't put his money into waste motion. But in Avery's cartoons, and in Bob Clampett's for Warner, the action is sometimes so furiously rapid and inventive that the cartoons threaten to come apart at the seams. Fortunately, they rarely do.

In these cases, and in others, the excesses were the inevitable result of all the exploring and experimenting that was going on. It wasn't until UPA that emphasizing the separate elements of a cartoon became an artistic principle, not an accident to be avoided.

The UPA cartoons and their successors—like "Yellow Submarine"—pander to certain audiences, rather than attempting to entertain them. Snob appeal is built in. Cartoons like John Hubley's underline all their departures from tradition, and virtually shout that they're produced for an elite, not for the vulgar mass that likes conventional cartoons. Hubley's cartoons are highly artificial, making no effort to create an alternate universe or any illusion of another reality. Their whole purpose would be defeated if the viewer weren't constantly aware that he was watching cleverly animated drawings. It's no accident that some of Hubley's cartoon characters have no faces. Faces would call attention to the characters and away from the animator. That would never

do, since Hubley's audience has been trained to be more interested in catching all the animator's little tricks than in a well-told story. Cartoons like "Moonbird" and "Yellow Submarine" are little more than animator's (or designer's) tricks, all on display so that the audience can have the pleasure of spotting them. Very pretty, very "interesting," and boring as hell to people who are interested in the techniques of animation only insofar as they reinforce an interesting storyline and make the characters come alive.

"Yellow Submarine" is the culmination of this trend, the disintegration of the cartoon made more technically polished and intellectually defensible than ever before. The story of "Yellow Submarine" is so flimsy as to be nonexistent, and the components of the film, rather than being integrated to advance the story, are manipulated very skillfully to conceal this hole at the center. As I said at the beginning, they're made to work against one another and call attention to one another, so that the audience is not only made aware of the animator and designer, it's diverted from noticing the lack of any story, at least for a while. There are too many other things to keep track of. This approach is pursued only within certain limits, of course, otherwise the cartoon would seem merely chaotic. Thus the principal contrast is that between the voices and the images. The movie's basic principle is: always have something happening, so that the audience won't realize that nothing is happening. It's a principle that many other cartoonmakers have followed, but never with such success, and rarely at such length. "Yellow Submarine" is the apotheosis of the quarter-century-long revolt against the Disney school of animation, and it's an empty shell.



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"Yellow Submarine" arrived at a time when young people—the Beatles' principal fans, of course—are more conscious of films than ever before, and more aware of a film's parts, sometimes to the point that they lose interest in the whole. Now that live-action movies are being tailored to the tastes of this audience, and what we see and hear is being dislocated so that the audience can notice the dislocations, and pride itself on its awareness, live-action movies are catching up with cartoons. "Yellow Submarine" is the embodiment of an idea whose time has come. And it's a chicken movie.

It's a great deal easier not to tell a story than to tell a story, and this is nothing if not the age of the easy masquerading as the relevant or the artistically superior. It's easy to make cartoons like "Yellow Submarine"—animation that isn't animated—and even easier to talk windily about the artistic advances that they represent. It's much harder to make a cartoon that finds its justification in the story it tells and in the response of a large and diverse audience, and especially hard now, in this time of limited animation and limited budgets. When today's cartoonmakers face up to this responsibility, instead of offering us shell games like "Yellow Submarine," then I'll find it possible to take their work a little more seriously.

POGO, POGOING . . .

THE POGO SPECIAL BIRTHDAY SPECIAL. Produced by Walt Kelly and Chuck Jones. Directed by Jones. Written by Kelly. Broadcast May 18, 1969, on the NBC television network. Re-broadcast February 22, 1970.

By Maggie Thompson

JACK AND JILL for May 1969 had a cover and four-page article "by Pogo" to plug the May 18 showing of "The Pogo Special Birthday Special." This may be a clue to the reason that so many long-time Walt Kelly fans, devoted to the depths and richness of the tapestry Kelly has built up over the years in the strip, did not feel much rewarded for the time spent in watching the show. "Pogo" described the show this way: "I thought that anybody should be allowed to celebrate the holiday of his choice any time he wanted to. So we set about acting that out. The story mainly involves Porkypine and a lot of confusion."

So, indeed, it seemed. But it was not the free-wheeling confusion of the strip, and the story was about as simplified as the language of the article. When Kelly was writing for children in ANIMAL COMICS, he filled the strip with entertainment for adults who might be reading the stories to their children. The stories were simple but **full**. There was always a plethora of dialogue or action—and sometimes both But the TV show was not full.

There were some very pleasant things about the show. The voices of Mam'selle (June Foray), Hound Dog (Les Tremayne), and P. T. (Kelly) were excellent and much in the spirit of the characters. Occasionally, a gesture or bit of Kelly business would ring particularly true. The characters are extraordinarily three-dimensional (as opposed to Schulz's characters, whom no sculptor has really managed with much success, thanks to the extreme stylization of the art) and transpose to animation excellently in most cases.

But. Pogo's voice was a real liability to the entire production. June Foray (no doubt, with some advice from Jones, Kelly, et al) did one of the worst jobs of her career—with a slow drawl that not only did not convey Pogo's intelligence and suppleness of mind but also slowed the pace of the entire production. Instead of being a

bright commentator, Pogo was a dull-witted, good-humored onlooker. And he was "cutesie-pie," to boot. His face was simplified to a flatness that conveyed little of the attractiveness of the character design, whereas, oddly, the other characters did retain depth. Was it **that** hard to keep the subtleties of Pogo's face in animation?

Sadly, then, it was Pogo who was the primary liability of the show; if he'd been omitted, maybe the show would have been more fun.

On the other hand, we've heard from a few people who are not fans and who probably don't read the strip much if at all. They were fascinated by the show and enjoyed themselves mightily. A couple of boys, about eight years old, whom we overheard a couple of days after the broadcast were still talking about how much they liked it. My freshman roommate in college approached the subject with great delight. She had **finally** found something about Pogo she liked. When asked what it was, she replied that she had really enjoyed the TV show. Pogo was cute—Porkypine was cute—and so forth. She had never liked the strip at all and did not read it. But the show was fun.

Maybe the show did what the subtler, fuller strip can't. It reached a really wide audience and gave it simple pleasure. But I wish somehow it could have given that same audience a richer pleasure.

. . . POGONE

By Mark Kausler

The most obvious characteristic to have pursued in animating Kelly's work would have been his slapstick and mistaken-identity themes. This would have provided great scope for all the characters to "do their thing" and really come across to the audience. Jones, however, chose to do an original story that played up Kelly's underlying sentiment, rather than his humor. The sentiment in "Pogo" is not so dominant as Jones would have us believe. At times, the show threatened to become a monologue for Porky, at the expense of the other characters. The more amusing Albert had very little to do, as did Churchy and Howland Owl, who have been such fantastic comic villains in their day.

One of the show's most successful characters was Hepzibah, the erotic skunk. There was a lot of very subtle animation that sharply emphasized her charm. I don't think that she has ever emerged this way in the strip. Hal Ambro animated one of the most delightful scenes, a close-up with wisps of hair falling over her eyes. It was the high spot of the entire program for me.

MISTER KELLY IS INVITED US OVER FOR A CAKE HE'S FIXIN'.
IN HONOR OF US BEIN' SUCH REAL LARGE STARS IN THE BIG FAT TELEVY SHOW HE WUPPED UP.
THE OL' BOSS, HE ALWAYS THROWS A LOT OF HIS-SELF INTO HIS WORK.
YEH—AN' IT'S TOO BAD ABOUT THAT, CHIEF.
HELP
MILK
EGGS

Before "The Pogo Special Birthday Special" was first broadcast in 1969, the Publishers-Hall Syndicate, which distributes "Pogo," sent out this promotional strip, along with a self-caricature of Kelly. It's perhaps the only time that Kelly has appeared in the strip itself, albeit with his face obscured by cake batter.

GIVING 'EM THE BIRD

IT'S TOUGH TO BE A BIRD (Walt Disney Productions). Directed by Ward Kimball. 21½ minutes.

By Mark Kausler

I've seen little new animation lately, and none of it noteworthy until the current release of "It's Tough to Be a Bird," with animation by Eric Larsen and Art Stevens. It is the latest in a series of Kimball films that began in 1968 with "Mediterranean Cruise," "The Mickey Mouse Fortieth Anniversary Show" and "Nature's Better-built Homes," all shown on the Disney television program. "Bird," which has been released with the Disney live-action feature "The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes," is the most successful and amusing film in the series so far. The star is a little red bird, drawn in extremely rough lines; he reminded me of the Crow in Columbia's old Fox and Crow cartoons. He speaks with the voice of Richard Bakalyan, lecturing the audience about bird life and its wanton destruction by man. In the slapstick introduction, the poor bird is shot, tromped by a giant shoe, and generally beaten up. There are live sequences, in one of which Kimball makes a cameo appearance with a tape recorder as he records bird sounds.

The conclusion of the film is in "Yellow Submarine"-Stan Vanderbeck-"Laugh-In" style, using old illustrations, toys, advertisements and even split-second clips from old Disney Silly Symphonies to make up an abstractly hilarious sequence. Many of the gags would have been censored if Walt Disney were still around, I'm afraid. It's food for the spirit to see Ward Kimball really get the crazy things out of his head onto film. Although this is not animation in the classic sense, I fully enjoyed it.

I was amazed at how rough the animation of the little bird was left at the Xerox state. Every construction line in his body and head is left visible. I really like this new style, as it captures the freedom and vivacity of the original drawings. The only other method of finishing that I prefer is the old ink technique in which many colored lines are used for every part of the character's body.

CARL BARKS BIBLIOGRAPHY

By Mike Barrier

This issue's installment of the Barks bibliography covers those Dell comic books with characters other than the Disney ducks—Barney Bear, Benny Burro, Andy Panda, Porky Pig, and Droopy. Two installments remain, one covering the Gold Key comics and one covering all the odds and ends—give-aways, premiums, Little Golden Books, letters to fan magazines, articles about Barks, and so on.

Additional changes have been made in "The Plan of this Bibliography." Briefly, the principal changes are: (1) The titles within each section will be arranged alphabetically, not chronologically. (2) I've set out the criteria for listing an article about Barks in that section of the bibliography. (3) There'll no longer be any distinction drawn between "giants" and ordinary comics. (4) The full page count will be given for all comics, not just one-shots. (5) I've specified that the data for the Dell and Gold Key comics won't be segregated when the bibliography is published in its final form. (6) Pertinent comments by Barks in other parts of the complete volume on his work will be cross-indexed with the appropriate bibliography entries.

Nothing earth-shaking, obviously, just small steps toward making the bibliography simpler and easier to use.

As things stand, the various Barks comic books will still be divided into three categories—comics with the Disney ducks, comics with other characters, and giveaway and premium comic books. I can see reasons for drawing these distinctions, but I'm not sure they're very good ones. I invite your opinions—should all comic books, regardless of how they were distributed, be lumped together in one section of the bibliography? Don't forget that the bibliography will be thoroughly indexed, so that having three categories shouldn't confuse anyone for very long, or delay him in finding a listing for a particular story.

There's greater emphasis in this installment on Carl Barks' own comments about his work, most of them from letters to me. When no source is credited for one of Barks' comments, it is from a unique document—a full listing, compiled by Mr. Barks from his own records, of all the work he's done for Western Publishing Company over the years. It's impossible to exaggerate the value of this listing in compiling this bibliography. Without it, the bibliography would be incomplete and in parts incorrect; with it, the bibliography will be a complete and accurate record of the work of "the good artist." He deserves no less, and now, thanks to his generous assistance, he'll receive no less.

No one else's contribution has been as important, of course, but Tom Andrae and Milton Gray have provided especially valuable information for the bibliography since the last issue of FUNNYWORLD was published. Others deserving thanks include Ed Pippin, Dave Smith and Arthur Scott.

Some mysteries remain, even in Barks' own listing. Some stories and covers and gags apparently never have been printed, or else have been published in some comic book that has eluded everyone, including Carl Barks. A full listing of these unsolved mysteries will accompany the last two installments of the bibliography.

One continuing mystery deserves continuing attention, however. As I mentioned in FUNNYWORLD No. 11, a number of Dell comics were published in two editions in the middle and late Fifties—one edition with ads on the covers, another without. Sometimes the strips dropped for ads were by Barks. This was the case with DAISY DUCK'S DIARY No. 1150; an ad replaced a strip by Barks on the back cover. A photocopy of that Barks back cover is needed, since the only copy of the comic that I own has an ad on the back cover. And, again, I want to encourage everyone to check their copies of certain comics covered by the last three installments of the bibliography, in case there are any more "lost" Barks strips that haven't been listed. The comics in question are the 1955-1957 issues of DONALD DUCK and UNCLE SCROOGE, and the 1955-1959 issues of the other Disney comics with the ducks (except for WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES).

By the same token, please let me know if any strips I've listed have been replaced by ads in your copies. (Charles Heffelfinger, who first called this to my attention, believes that regularly published comics were published in two editions only for a year or two, whereas there were two editions of Four Color comics and "giants" for some time after that.) Comics I especially want checked: UNCLE SCROOGE No. 15 and GYRO GEARLOOSE No. 1095. (Some readers have already checked these, but not enough.)

To return for a moment to Barks' comments on his stories: I know that he has written letters to any number of his fans, in many cases answering questions about his stories that they've asked. I'm sure that many of his answers have been repeated, with slight variations, in letters to me and in his listing of his work, but I'm equally sure that other comments would be new to me. I'd welcome photocopies of portions of letters from Barks that might be useful for the bibliography. Obviously, I'm not interested in prying into purely personal correspondence, and I'll obtain Barks' permission before publishing excerpts from any of these letters.

For those who do send such photocopies: please don't forget to mention the dates of the letters.

As I said in the last issue, and repeat formally this issue in the "Plan," there'll be no segregation of the Gold Key and Dell issues when the bibliography is published in its final form. This is a change in my original plans. Even so, there's some value in listing the Gold Key issues separately in FUNNYWORLD. This way, the bibliography as published in the magazine will be more nearly up to date before it's published in its final form. Since Barks reprints and even some original stories are still appearing, there'll be some Barks items that appear between the publication of the Gold Key installment in FUNNYWORLD and the publication of the bibliography in book form . . . but there won't be as many as there would have been if I had been listing the Gold Key issues as I went along. As many as possible of these late additions will be included in the complete bibliography, and there may even be supplements to the bibliography issued from time to time.

The Plan of This Bibliography

By Mike Barrier

This bibliography of the work of Carl Barks is to be published in seven installments, covering the following material:

1. WALT DISNEY'S COMICS — 1943-1949 (FW 7, September 1967).
2. WALT DISNEY'S COMICS — 1950-1962 (FW 8, December 1967).
3. DONALD DUCK — 1942-1962 (FW 9, May 1968).
4. UNCLE SCROOGE — 1952-1962 (FW 10, November 1968).
5. Other Dell comic books with the Disney ducks — 1949-1962 (FW 11, May 1969).
6. Dell comic books with other characters — 1943-1954 (FW 12).
7. Gold Key comic books—1962 to date (FW 13).
8. Giveaway and premium comic books (FW 14).

   Other comics-related material by Barks (FW 14).

   Non-comics material by Barks (FW 14).

   Material about Barks (FW 14).

The bibliography is appearing first in FUNNYWORLD so that as many errors as possible may be corrected before the bibliography is published in its final form. At this point, it's uncertain what form the finished bibliography will take—booklet, hard-cover book, or what—and what will be included in addition to the bibliography itself. The aim will be to provide as complete a guide to the comic-book work of Carl Barks as possible, and so the book probably will contain articles, an interview, the full publishing histories of the comic books in which Barks' work appeared, and, hopefully, some reproductions from Barks' stories. Full details will be announced in FUNNYWORLD when the bibliography is ready for publication.

As can be seen from the list above of the eight installments, this bibliography will not be all-inclusive. It will not cover Barks' work at the Disney studio, or for the CALGARY EYE-OPENER, or the paintings he has done since his retirement in 1966. Instead, it will cover all his published comic-book work (including reprints) and other comics-related material (also including reprints) done during his comic-book career. For obvious reasons, only American publications will be included, with perhaps a few exceptions. The bibliography will also cover articles about Barks in both professional and amateur publications. Only the more important articles about Barks and his comic-book work will be listed. All the articles listed will contain clear references to Barks and/or his stories, and the references will be more substantial than the mere mention of his name in passing. Likewise, I see no point in listing the articles in which only Barks' characters are mentioned, without any direct connection with Barks or particular stories he's drawn. After all, Uncle Scrooge has been drawn by a lot of people (usually badly). I don't anticipate listing any foreign articles about Barks, but events (the spectacular sales last year in Italy of a volume of Barks reprints, for example) could change that.

Within each of the larger subdivisions of the bibliography, e.g., "Comic Books With the Disney Ducks," comic-book titles will be listed in alphabetical order. The individual entries will be organized this way: issue number, date, full page count, including covers, and full title of each story (given exactly as in the comic book, except for the omnipresent "Walt Disney's" or "Walt Disney presents"), number of pages in the story (but not page numbers, unless the pages are numbered in the comic book itself), and a brief summary, or precis, for each story. Covers and other illustrations will also be listed and described. There will be no distinction between "giants" and ordinary comics. Except as noted, all comic books are standard size (approximately seven inches by ten inches), all pages are four panels deep, and Barks both wrote and illustrated.

This pattern differs slightly for comics that weren't published on a regular schedule, like the early issues of DONALD DUCK and UNCLE SCROOGE. Many Disney comics were published in Dell's series of one-shot comic books, which were identified as "Four Color Comics" through No. 101 (except for No. 100). The Four Color designation was dropped from the covers in 1946, but the numbering of the series continued uninterrupted, and so issues after No. 101 are identified in the bibliography as Four Color comics, too. I've listed the full "official" title of each one-shot as given in the indicia that usually were published at the bottom of the inside front cover. (The "official" title is given only for the DONALD DUCK and UNCLE SCROOGE one-shots, since the other one-shots didn't have individual titles; every issue of DAISY DUCK'S DIARY is titled just that.) This "official" title is at variance with the title on the cover of the comic book. The dates given for one-shots, in parentheses, are the code dates for the comics. These code dates usually were given at the bottom of the first page of the comic. For example: "439"—September 1943, meaning not that the comic was published in that month, but that it appeared when comics cover-dated September 1943 were appearing. In some cases, publication on a regular schedule began while the comic book was still appearing in the Four Color series, although the date was given only in the indicia, and not on the cover. By contrast, on many later Four Colors, dates were given both on the covers and in the indicia, even though the comic book was not being published on a regular schedule. Both these dates and the code dates (which are sometimes inconsistent) are given.

All reprinted stories will be cross-referenced, as will stories that are redrawn and rewritten versions of earlier Barks stories. A subjective distinction will be made between stories that are "new versions" of old stories and stories that are "highly similar" to old stories. My classifications are open to challenge. When the Barks volume is published, there will be references in the bibliography itself to material in other parts of the book; for example, the entry for the Donald Duck story "Lost in the Andes" will refer the reader to Barks' comments about that story in an interview.

Other comments by Barks about individual stories, when available, will be published as part of the entries for those stories. Except as noted otherwise, these comments will be taken from a listing of his work compiled by Barks in the summer of 1969.

Although Barks' work in Gold Key comic books will be listed in FUNNYWORLD apart from his Dell work, the Gold Key data will be combined with the Dell data in the complete bibliography. Dell and Gold Key issues will be identified as such when the bibliography is published in its final form, but they won't be segregated in different parts of the book.

FUNNYWORLD's readers are encouraged to submit corrections, additions, and suggestions for improvements. Usable contributions of this sort will bring either a free copy of the complete bibliography or a discount, depending on how much information is supplied, how valuable the information is, and the price of the book.

THE CARL BARKS BIBLIOGRAPHY
Part Six

II. Dell Comic Books With Other Characters

A. MICKEY MOUSE

Four Color 79 — (August) 1945 — 36

MICKEY MOUSE and The Riddle of the Red Hat — 11 — Mickey laughs at Minnie's new hat, then buys her a box of candy to make up. He mistakes a girl in a similar hat for Minnie, and the girl mistakes Mickey for someone else and gives him a "diamond ring" that seems to be made only of glass, but actually contains a large ruby. Minnie is kidnaped by the girl's real contact (Black Pete, although he is never identified by name) and is taken to the home of "Mister Whoosit." Mickey and Goofy also go there, on the girl's instructions. Mickey is captured, and Goofy—who has the ruby hidden in his shoe—runs for the police. The police are preoccupied with the stolen ruby and pay no attention to Goofy, who returns to the house. Mickey takes advantage of the surprise caused by Goofy's appearance at a window, and tricks the crooks into thinking the police have arrived. (Barks: "Mickey Mouse and Porky Pig I barely touched. They weren't my cup of tea." June 9, 1966, letter to Mike Barrier. "About how I happened to do the Mickey and Porky stories in 1944 and '45—I was asked to do so by the office. I wouldn't have ventured into those characters' fields by choice." February 20, 1970, letter to Barrier.)

B. NEW FUNNIES

No. 76 — June 1943 — 68

ANDY PANDA — 10 — art only — Andy befriends a poor mother and her son. Andy and the boy take a cart full of the mother's doughnuts to a circus, where an ostrich eats all of them. Then Andy saves a lion tamer's life by talking to the lions in their own language, and the circus owner rewards him with a bag of money. Andy gives the money to the poor family. (This story is three panels deep.) (Barks: "Some office staffer wrote it, maybe Eleanor Packer, who was editor of the L.A. division then." August 1967 letter to Mike Barrier.)

C. OUR GANG COMICS

No. 8 — Nov.-Dec. 1943 — 60

BENNY "THE LONESOME BURRO" — 8 (pp. 43-50) — Benny tries to help some beavers build a dam, after an owl tells him he should be working, but his efforts to help backfire. (This story is three panels deep.) (Barks: "About Barney Bear and Benny Burro. I guess I was asked to draw and write their stories because of the extreme shortage of comic book men in those wartime years." April 17, 1967, letter to Mike Barrier.)

No. 9 — Jan.-Feb. 1944 — 60

HAPPY HOUND(Detective) — 8 (pp. 21-28) — A prisoner escapes from Alca-sing Prison on Happy's day off, when Happy wants to go fishing. Happy keeps crossing paths with the crook despite his best efforts not to. The crook finally decides that Happy is rabid and flees back to prison. ("Happy Hound" is actually Droopy, and the prisoner is the wolf who was Droopy's opponent in many of Tex Avery's MGM cartoons.)

BENNY "THE LONESOME BURRO" — 8 (pp. 41-48) — Benny plays follow-the-leader with a little mountain goat until his sneeze causes a snow slide that carries them into a wolf's cave. Benny saves the goat by starting another snow slide with his bray. (This story is three panels deep.)

No. 10 — Mar.-Apr. 1944 — 52

BENNY "THE LONESOME BURRO" — 8 — Benny goes to the desert to see "the most beautiful bird in the world," a macaw who plays vicious tricks on Benny until he plunges into a mudhole, while trying to break Benny's back with a power dive, and loses his feathers.

No. 11 — May-June 1944 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney and Benny come to a Western town whose inhabitants are fleeing because of mysterious groans from the desert. They find that the groans are coming from a huge "horn" hollowed out of a mountain by a madman whose madness can be cured only by a sound "louder than any sound in the world"—a sound produced when Benny brays into the horn.

HAPPY HOUND Detective — 6 — Happy apathetically captures the wolf prisoner again, then lets him visit his "mother," actually a disguised hoodlum. The two crooks try to kill Happy with poison, a cleaver, and by various other means, but succeed only in hurting one another, until finally the wolf flees back to prison.

No. 12 — July-Aug. 1944 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney and Benny go moose hunting, using Benny as a lure, but the moose they take home with them is only unconscious, not dead, and when it recovers, it wreaks havoc on their truck, eventually running it into a lake.

No. 13 — Sept.-Oct. 1944 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO —8 — Barney orders a cowboy outfit and tries Benny as his steed before deciding to capture a wild horse. Barney tackles "Satan," "the wildest, meanest brute on the whole range." and in the end it's Barney who is roped and tied.

No. 14—Nov.-Dec. 1944—52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney, a sheepherder, uses Benny as a decoy to trap a marauding wolf, but Benny is carried away by the wolf. He escapes later, and then has to rescue Barney from the wolf when Barney comes looking for him.

No. 15, Jan.-Feb. 1945 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney decides to become a matador after seeing a bullfight, but his "practice" with a bull in the open fields leaves him battered and on crutches.

No. 16 — Mar.-Apr. 1945 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney starts to find a bee tree, but changes his mind when he sees

cougar tracks. Barney finds not one but two cougars in a tree, which is also filled with angry bees. All wind up tangled in a cage that Barney has brought to hold the first cougar.

No. 17 — May-June 1945 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney inherits ten thousand acres of desert land and a divining rod, which leads him not to water but to oil, then gold, and finally diamonds—all of which he trades away for something to drink.

No. 18 — July-Aug. 1945 — 36

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 5 — In Mexico, Barney serenades a senorita whose flower pot has fallen on his head. He wins her favor in competition with a rival serenader, whom he duels with slingshots, but the senorita proves to be enormously fat. (The pages in this story and the two following stories have ten or eleven panels each because of the war-time paper shortage.)

No. 19 — Sept.-Oct. 1945 — 36

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 6 — Barney goes fishing for a turtle for turtle soup, but catches the turtle on his toe. It stays there despite Benny's efforts to remove it, until Barney sticks his foot in a beehive. (See note to No. 18.)

No. 20 — Nov.-Dec. 1945 — 36

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 6 — Barney reads an old book on medicine and immediately decides he's suffering from the illnesses the book describes. Benny, trying to convince Barney that he's not sick, catches cold in the process. (See note to No. 18.)

No. 21 — Jan.-Feb. 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Benny forces Barney to go skiing on a beautiful winter day, but Barney goes to sleep for the winter at the top of the ski slope. Benny rides with Barney on his skis, on a harrowing trip down the slope, then joins him in hibernation. (This story is three panels deep.)

No. 22 — Mar.-Apr. 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney's nephew from Alaska—a Kodiak bear with a huge appetite —comes to visit, eating an enormous quantity of food before Barney steers him to the home of Barney's cousin Brownie. When Brownie's family hears about how much Barney has fed his nephew, they descend upon him en masse.

No. 23 — May-June 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney has a terrible headache, and Benny tries to keep things quiet for him—but he makes so much noise doing it that Barney winds up with shellshock.

No. 24 — July 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Benny talks Barney into "roughing it" in Yellowstone National Park. They camp near a steam hole that erupts into a geyser after Barney has pitched his tent over it to enjoy its warmth. Barney then pitches his tent over a fire, and the heat shrinks his wet tent and blanket.

No. 25 — August 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR (AND) BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney goes hunting with a gun, but Benny persuades him that it's too dangerous, so Barney switches to a bow and arrow. Barney hurts himself in various ways while bow hunting, and finally proves to Benny that he can hurt himself by shooting an arrow in any direction, when the arrow he fires at random starts a landslide.

BARNEY BEAR
BENNY BURRO
PRESENTED BY M-G-M CARTOONS
SEE WHAT AUNT CINNAMON BROWN GAVE ME? AN OLD, OLD BOOK THAT TELLS HOW TO TELL WHEN YOU'RE GONNA BE SICK!
IT SAYS HERE IF YOU'RE GETTIN' HONKUS OF THE BRONKUS, YOU'LL FEEL DIZZY AFTER SPINNING AROUND TWENTY TIMES.
GRUNTS & GROANS
I KNOW I'M NOT GONNA BE SICK, BUT IT COSTS NOTHIN' TO MAKE SURE!
MIGOSH! I FEEL DIZZY! IF THAT BOOK IS RIGHT, I'M COMING DOWN WITH HONKUS OF THE BRONKUS!
WHAT OTHER DISEASES DOES IT SAY YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE?
IT SAYS HERE THAT IF YOUR TONGUE HAS A GREEN COAT, START DOCTORIN' FOR GASTITIS, GINGIVITIS, PINK-EYE AND THE MIDITY OF THE HONSULUM!
MY TONGUE IS GREEN!
SURE! YOU WERE EATING MINT LEAVES THIS MORNING!
MINT LEAVES CAN CAUSE CRACKOSITY OF THE CRANIUM!
I'M GOIN RIGHT IN AND GO TO BED! I'M A SICK MAN!
THE ONLY SICKNESS YOU HAVE IS CRACKOSITY OF THE IMAGINATION!

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Barks' Barney Bear and Benny Burro, in OUR GANG No. 20, Nov.-Dec. 1945.

No. 26 — September 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney and Benny go fishing in the North Woods, but a pelican steals their catch and then they lose their poles to a huge fish. Barney catches a fat fish with his belt buckle, but has to throw it back because it is too short. Barney finally tries to buy a fish, but has to settle for smoked pelican instead.

No. 27 — October 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney takes a job as dog catcher, using Benny to pull his wagon. The stray dog he pursues saves his life when Barney and the dog are trapped on a raft that's drifting toward a waterfall. Barney loses his job, then buys a license for the stray to save it from the new dogcatcher.

No. 28 — November 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney goes out into the fields to paint a picture that he can enter in a museum's contest. His painting is mangled badly when a bull appears, but the museum's judges award the messy results first prize.

No. 29 — December 1946 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Barney tricks Benny with a pot of gold-painted pebbles at the end of a rainbow. Benny, with the help of a miner, fools Barney by substituting real gold for the pebbles, then puts a note in a second pot telling Barney that he must buy all the gumdrops in town for Benny before the pot can be filled with gold. Instead of gold, Benny fills the pot with Barney's painted pebbles.

No. 30 — January 1947 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — art and editing — Barney is golfing when he discovers that the bottom of a lake on the course is covered with golf balls. He tries to outwit McDuff, the Scottish manager of the golf course,

who has forbidden him to go into the lake, and finally siphons the water out of the lake—but he siphons out the balls, too, and the end of his hose runs to McDuff's truck. (Barks edited a script supplied by Western.)

No. 31 — February 1947 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — art and editing — Barney goes to a gym to take boxing lessons so that he can whip Mooseface McElk, who refuses to keep his chickens out of Barney's yard. Mooseface is too tough even for the gym owner, but finally yields when Benny—who has been preaching against fighting until Mooseface insults him—kicks him into submission. (First appearance of Mooseface.)

No. 32 — March 1947 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — art and editing — Barney goes hunting for Klepto Klippo, a thief with a price on his head, but Klippo steals Barney's money, his rifle, his phone, his clothes, and finally even his house, with the sheriff and Barney inside. When Klippo lassoes the rope around Klippo and pinning him to the tree.

No. 33 — April 0947 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — art and editing — Barney's rich, ferocious old Uncle Grizzly comes to visit, and Barney tries to set up some way to save his uncle's life and so win his favor. All his strategems backfire, but then Grizzly tells Barney that he's making him his sole heir because he hasn't asked for money.

No. 34 — May 1947 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — art and editing — Barney puts a "For Sale" sign in Mooseface's yard, trying to get rid of him, but Mooseface puts it in Barney's yard. Barney sells his house, but then finds that another house is not to be had. Benny pretends to belong to Mooseface and starts a fight between Mooseface and his new neighbor, so that the purchaser of Barney's house gladly sells it back to him.

No. 35 — June 1947 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — Mooseface, jealous of Barney's garden, tricks him into digging it up by telling him that there are agates in the ground. Benny, vowing to teach Mooseface a lesson, tells him that Old Man Cougar, the previous owner of his house, may have left his fortune hidden on the property. Old Man Cougar owned Brney's house, too, and he also catches the fever. Both tear down their houses. Then Barney and Mooseface remember that Old Man Cougar owned Benny's house, too, and go there to sleep out a storm before tearing it down. (Earlier version of the ten-page story in UNCLE SCROOGE No. 6.)

No. 36 — July 1947 — 52

BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO — 8 — The watches of Barney, Benny and Mooseface all vanish, and Mooseface accuses Barney of being a thief. Barney discovers that his pet pet magpie has stolen the watches. He tries to return Mooseface's watch, but Mooseface catches him and handcuffs him to a bed. Mooseface discovers that Barney is innocent, but the magpie steals the keys to the handcuffs before Barney can be freed. (Barks: "Last of Barney and Benny, thank God!" "I believe it was my constant griping about having too much to do that got me free of the Barneys and Bennys. The D.D.'s, the W.D.C.'s and the quarterly Uncle Scrooges were all I could handle." December 11, 1969 letter to Mike Barrier.)

D. PORKY PIG

Four Color 48 — (July) 1944 — 52

PORKY PIG in "Porky of the Mounties" — 24 — art only — Petunia goes to Canada for the summer, and when she fails to write him for a week, Porky decides to go to a masquerade party, as a Mounted Policeman. The wind blows Porky's hat into a boxcar, and he and Bugs are trapped inside and carried to Canada. In Canada, Porky is mistaken by Petunia's uncle for Dauntless of the Mounties, who has been summoned to deal with a gang of bandits. Afraid to reveal his true identity, Porky goes after the bandits and is captured by them and left in a bear's cave. He is saved by a cub whom he had freed from a trap earlier, and joins the real Dauntless in halting a bank holdup by the gang. (See Barks' comments to "MICKEY MOUSE and The Riddle of the Red Hat" in MICKEY MOUSE Four Color No. 79.)

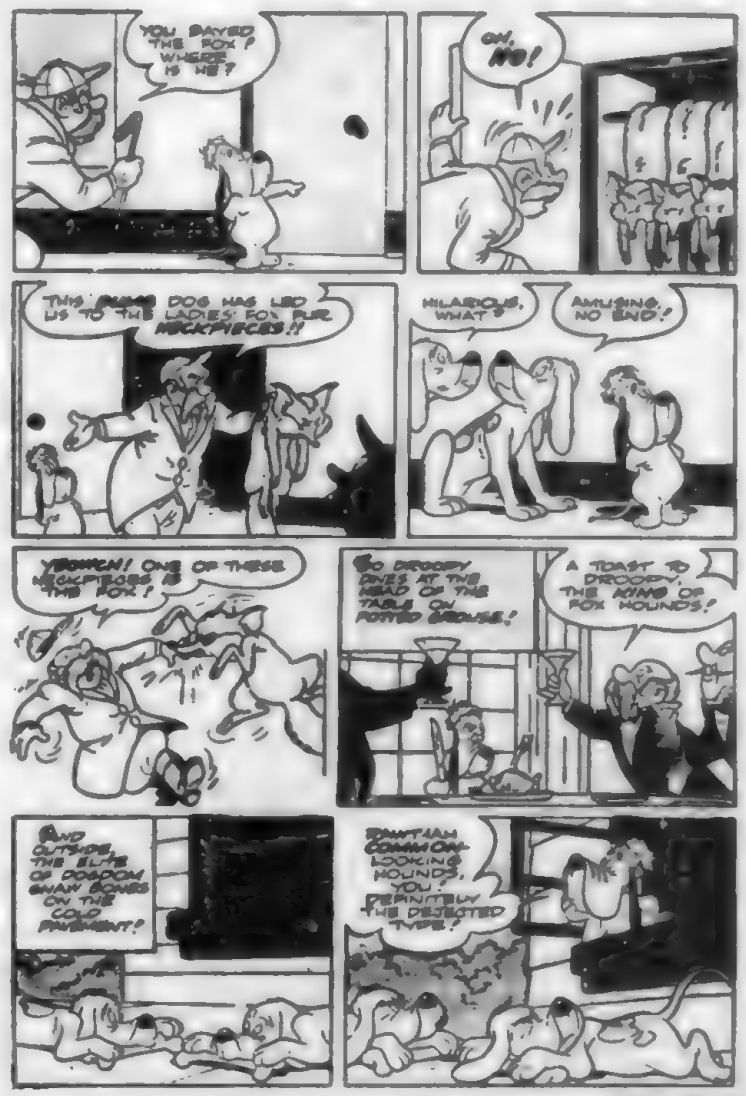
E. TOM AND JERRY WINTER CARNIVAL

1 — (December) 1952 — 100

DROOPY — 8 (pp. 45-52) — script only — Droopy is given a job as a fox hound, and he bumbles through the hunt until he finds the fox's tracks in a creek bed and follows the fox into a closet at the hunter's house. The fox is at first mistaken for a fur neckpiece, but Droopy winds up as the toast of the hunt. (Barks: "The office wrote me to ask if I would do a story for Droopy. Then asked for another, and so on." January 15, 1969, letter to Mike Barrier. "The reason I happened to do the Droopy scripts in 1952 and 53 is that the office wrote me a note or phoned and asked me to try to write them. I never went out of my way to ask for those sorts of jobs." December 11, 1969, letter to Mike Barrier.)

2 — (December) 1953 — 100

DROOPY — 8 (pp. ??-??) — script only — Droopy, while looking for a place to bury his bone, is picked up and taken to the pound. There, he's chosen as the mascot for a ship headed for a tropical island in search of Bluebeard's buried treasure. On the island, Droopy uncovers the treasure when he finally finds a place to bury his bone. (Reprinted in TOM AND JERRY SUMMER FUN No. 1, 1967.)


YOU PAYED THE FOX? WHERE IS HE?
OH, NO!
THIS DOG HAS LED US TO THE LADIES' FOX FUR NECKPIECES!!
HILARIOUS. WHAT'S
AMUSING. NO END!
YEOWCH! ONE OF THESE NECKPIECES IS THE FOX!
SO DROOPY DINES AT THE HEAD OF THE TABLE ON ROTTED GROUSE!
A TOAST TO DROOPY, THE KING OF FOX HOUNDS!
AND OUTSIDE, THE ELITE OF DOGDOM GNAW BONES ON THE COLD PAVEMENT!
DAWTHAN COMMON-LOOKING HOUNDS. YOU DEFINITELY THE DEJECTED TYPE!

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Droopy, in a Barks script illustrated by the late Harvey Eisenberg. From TOM AND JERRY WINTER CARNIVAL No. 1, 1952.

letters:

From CARL BARKS: All the arguments in the letters section of No. 11 scare me. Was I a conscious political flagwaver or an unconscious iconoclast? I'll have to analyze myself. The fact that you and the Thompsons and Stephen Eng and many others see all sorts of underlying meanings in my stories makes me wonder if I **did** write "messages" into my scripts more often than I remember. The digs I took at villains were conscious messages, certainly. "No such thing as a rehabilitated bad man" is one of my pet beliefs.

From WARD KIMBALL (Disney animator and director): I don't know where you got your information about the early Disney cartoons being destroyed, but the rumor is entirely false. The studio has every single negative for every single Walt Disney-produced picture safely locked away in temperature-controlled vaults. At any time, we can strike off a new print in either 16mm or 35mm. However, the **animated drawings**, along with exposure sheets, of some of the early Mickeys were destroyed by some nut who wanted to make more room in the scene "morgue." This was done during World War II. Perhaps the fact that a few of the original **drawings** were lost has gradually been distorted to mean that the film negatives and prints themselves were gone.

Of the first fifteen shorts made for Columbia in black and white, we have only the original negative left for the last twelve in the group, MM-4, "The Barn Dance," through MM-15, "Wild Waves." However, the animation sheets and drawings for MM-1 through MM-3, "Plane Crazy," "Gallopin' Gaucho" and "Steamboat Willie," are still preserved in the morgue. The MM group consists of the fifteen pictures made from May 15, 1928, through December 21, 1929. The drawings for all of the shorts since this date, beginning with CS-1, "The Skeleton Dance," have been preserved.

Due to the space-storage problem, we are at the present time going through much of our animation morgue to see what can be disposed of and only preserving scenes and/or drawings that have artistic value or future repeat animation possibilities. This should not panic any of the Disneyana lovers, for only the miscellaneous animation effects and secondary animation are being thrown away.

In the case of the war training films: these were usually made for **outside** contractors, who owned the original negatives. The drawings for these training films were not destroyed because of their classified nature, but because they had no reference value for future animation. The art work was usually dull, technical, and uninteresting. (Who cares about how to assemble a Canadian Bays Antitank Gun?)

From JOHN BENSON: It has been pointed out to me that I neglected to mention the most spectacular scene in "The Flying House." This comes about when the house leaves the earth and flies around the moon. The earth is seen circling the moon and disappearing behind the moon in the fashion of the heavenly bodies in "2001: A Space Odyssey." I don't know how I could have neglected to mention that. Also, I believe that the audience actually applauded Farmer Al Falfa, a culture hero from those childhood TV screens, just like the "Out of the Inkwell" clown. Also, I should have mentioned that two distinct Krazy Kats were shown. The earlier ones, with which Herriman was connected (or directed), were somewhat like the strip. The later ones were the ones that I mentioned as being so similar to Felix.

From ROGER BRAND: I think Maggie Thompson has hit on something most people seem to overlook—that Donald Duck, along with Kelly's Albert the Alligator, is one of the most human characters in comics, on account of his range and depth. Surely he goes all the way from loser to winner; from coward to hero; from ninny to prodigy; from tyrant to democrat, etc. Even the kids don't have his range; they're too hip. Of course, Huey, Dewey, and Louie were what we all wanted to be like when we were young . . . even our girlfriends, since they were tomboys.

Having been to Disneyland several times (out of the same morbid fascination that used to compel me to watch "Truth or Consequences" occasionally), I can testify that it is pretty malignant. Especially since they now keep out hippies. Its one redeeming virtue is the "Art of Animation" exhibit, which is fascinating.

The Mickey Mouse interview was hilarious!

Matt Rosenblatt and Dave Estrada continue their policy of last issue, of making one so embarrassed that one can't laugh comfortably.

When I visited Disneyland last summer, the "Art of Animation" exhibit had been removed.

From MAGGIE THOMPSON: This issue is distinguished by having the best interview John Benson has ever done. This may be due to his being able to control so well not only the questions but also the answers. Or it just may be that his interviewee is one of the top speakers in the entertainment field today. He revealed depths to his personality that I'm sure few of us suspected. I'll be viewing his performances in quite a different light from here on.

And—hey! I honest to gosh **laughed** (out loud, like) at "Fearless Fang"! So did Don. You're still learning to master the art form—but as you're doing so, you're paying attention to the humor, too.

No doubt it was the lack of space that caused the problem, but you threw out a bunch of unsupported value judgments in your review of THE DISNEY VERSION that, sorta stopped me in my figurative tracks as I read. "Their closest spiritual kin today may be the cartoonist of the sort who favors poker and strong cigars, says that all he's trying to do is 'have fun and make money,' and is sometimes corrupted by small-college intellectuals." Who **on earth** are you talking about? "And, of course, it's this ground that has been all but abandoned in recent years, so that we're left with a choice only between slow and heavy cartoons like 'Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day' or highly artificial, snob-appeal cartoons like 'Moonbird.'" What, exactly, do you mean—especially since early Disney cartoons seem to be gaining "snob appeal" (is that a self-sufficient denigrating comment—or what?) and are highly artificial?

Mr. Eng (no, by golly, I'll call him Steve even if he does persist in calling me "Mrs. Thompson") seems concerned over what he considers my implicit demand for censorship. So I hereby give him permission to make any fool statement about Donald Duck that he wants. Hope that makes him happy.

And I do apologize for misquoting—or, more correctly, hurriedly typoing comments from—Steve. I have to write—and do almost everything else—in far greater haste than I'd like.

I don't see "the problem" as being that Eng isn't "a comics fan as such," though. I can't see what that has to do with **anything**—except that he's probably cutting himself off from a wealth of fine material which is also "competing . . . against other literature." Though that, come to think of it, is a weird way of looking at **any** art or writing. Gad, think of all art **competing** with all other art. Horrors . . .

In regard to the DISNEY VERSION review, the cartoonist to whom I refer is Walt Kelly, of course, and the "small-college intellectuals" are the people who have praised Kelly for all the wrong reasons, and so, I think, altered the course of the strip for the worse. Tell Kelly he's a great cartoonist, and he's not much interested; tell him he's a great thinker (which he sure as hell isn't), and he may feign modesty, but he likes it. Such has been my impression, anyway. And it's been my impression, too, that the people most likely to find a soul brother in Kelly are liberals stuck in a conservative environment, especially college professors and the like who live in small cities and towns. I was pretty ambiguous, I must admit. If I had any confidence in the validity of my little theory (which I do), I should have stated it clearly . . . or left it out entirely, since a full exposition would have been out of place in that review.

Re: "Moonbird" and its snob appeal, see my review of "Yellow Submarine" in this issue.

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(Continued from Page 11)

get formal with a co-monicker like that.

I'm not really troubled, just surprised you should play with someone's byline—formalize . . . or Christianize, if there's such a word—it. No one in the world calls me Robert except the IRS, and I do my best not to speak to them.

Now some specific comments, if they may shed some light: I tracked Crumb down around the country and when I finally located him in California—he'd **been** in NYC—we talked over the phone for twenty dollars' worth of time, late at night. In truth, he told me things which are reported in the story as trends or possible events—it wasn't quotable—but more important, he was skulled out of his mind and I was lucky to get a few useful quotes for the piece—that is, direct quotes, because much of what he told me jibed with what other artists had been saying, and didn't merit attribution to Crumb in particular. But, really, the important thing was his head that night, and I'm not in a position to do long-distance interviewing of that nature several times in the hope of getting zappy quotes. I think Crumb is an artist who **does**, and doesn't theorize, and I think that's just fine. I also think he can be juvenile in his work and willful, but he's terrifically talented.

I guess what I'm saying is that Crumb has struck some salient blows for the fight against collective idiocy and that he has a brash approach which accepts no guidelines—this is swell, great, challenging, but he's a young man and will have to be measured against his own boldness.

Comix—it's Crumb's term and a number of the people I talked to dig it—to make the distinction, if nothing else, from comics and the syndicates (Establishment)—and I kinda like it myself, I'm sorry it offends you—"Yicch"—but I feel that kind of semantic purism is very much expendable.

The "gamey" strips—common now—CAVALIER has enough troubles with redneck distributors and wholesalers and local moral guardians for us (I'm a contributing editor) to risk having the issue get busted.

Bode—okay, the estimate of "genius" status is highly debatable—but I spent a good deal of time with Vaughn and have seen tons of his work and while I really do agree with your "dis-da" observations and with your remark that his stuff is text-heavy—like so many artists, he needs an editor—his talent I found, as did the agency I sent him to, **big**. In any case, the label was applied lightly, and as a personal opinion, and I find Bode as hard to read as I do Metzger, not to speak of Griffin.

From BOB FOLLETT: I can't really write a rebuttal to your comments on Wilson. Your argument used the premise that there are subjects and styles which should be closed to the cartoonist for reasons of propriety. Wilson fails, in your opinion, because his characters, draped in an abundance of warts and a paucity of clothing, are invariably involved in pastimes that will never make it to the late late show.

Criticism of this sort is useless to the underground comix reader, since he generally doesn't share your aversions. A more usable approach might be achieved through an examination of Wilson's techniques and achievements as a cartoonist, without worrying greatly about the moral suitability of his subjects.

Wilson's pluses are as magnificent as his failings. I would imagine that he fails as a cartoonist in the normal sense. There is little if any coherence to a Wilson "story line." Wilson produces images—vivid, vivid images. His multiple-panel drawings are generally little more than his single double-page works—gigantic climaxes to stories that have no beginnings and generally can have but one ending. A Wilson story ending, should he ever care to draw one, would vary only by the number of bodies and clothing styles of the departed battalions.

Which leads to the major fault in Wilson's work and the one which may relegate him forever to the group of also-rans—given the absence of a story line and limiting himself to "meth" freaks, motorcycle bandits, pirates, dyke queens and tide monsters—give or take a wall-eyed professor or two—Wilson can only come up with a certain very finite number of combinations for his drawings. The meth freaks can only meet so many "Screaming Gypsy Bandits" before the work loses its charm. But Wilson will answer this question for us in the next couple of years.

From ART SCOTT: I really don't care much for Fritz. The pro-Fritz forces, like yourself, seem to prefer the cast-of-characters-in-continuity sort of thing that we are used to from decades of "funny animal" strips, from Barks on down to Hanna-Barbera, and similar junk. I think Crumb's real genius (and I use the word without qualification) lies in other directions. Crazy, one-page near-Dada things like "Keep on Truckin'" and short anarchic pieces like "Neato Keeno" impress me most, because they represent a truly radical break from what has gone before. Ongoing characters and followable story lines certainly aren't the only available means of working out ideas, though they are certainly the most familiar. Crumb has broken out of that, though he can use it as brilliantly as anyone ("Dirty Dog" and "Lenore Goldberg" are two very different uses of conventional techniques—and Mr. Natural, too).

I'm surprised that no one mentioned Gilbert Shelton. If anyone besides Crumb deserves the genius label, it is he. He has certainly made the most telling use of the ongoing characters-straight story thing with Wonder Wart Hog and the Freak Brothers. The Freak Brothers story in RADICAL AMERICA KOMIKS is one of the most perfect **comic** stories I've ever read. He has the most keenly developed comic sense: satire, incongruity, **timing**. His work is sharp and compassionate at the same time (a characteristic of Barks). He lacks Crumb's wild imagination, but he compensates by sharpness of observation ("Billy Graham Reaches the Dope Mystics," which has convulsed every head and near-head I've shown it to).

Fishhead